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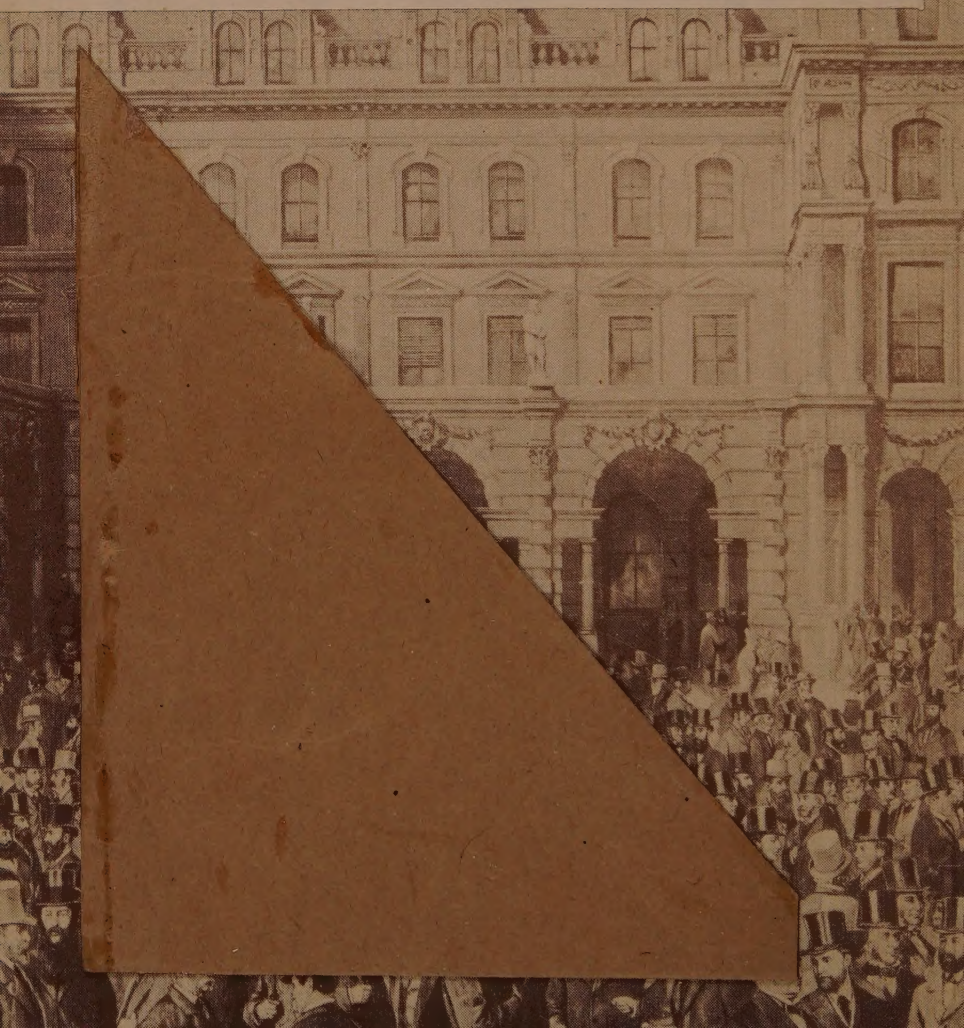
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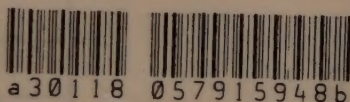
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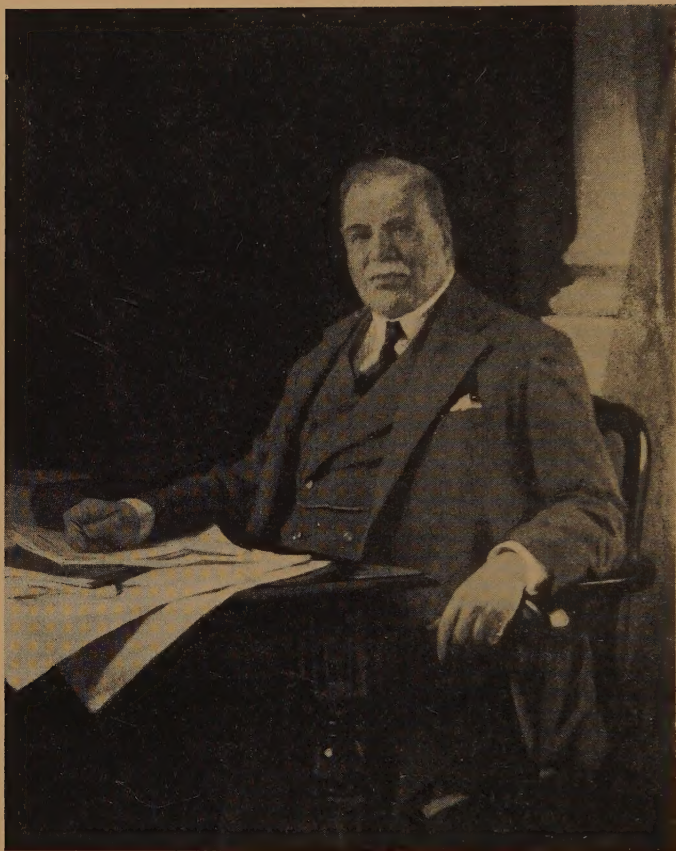
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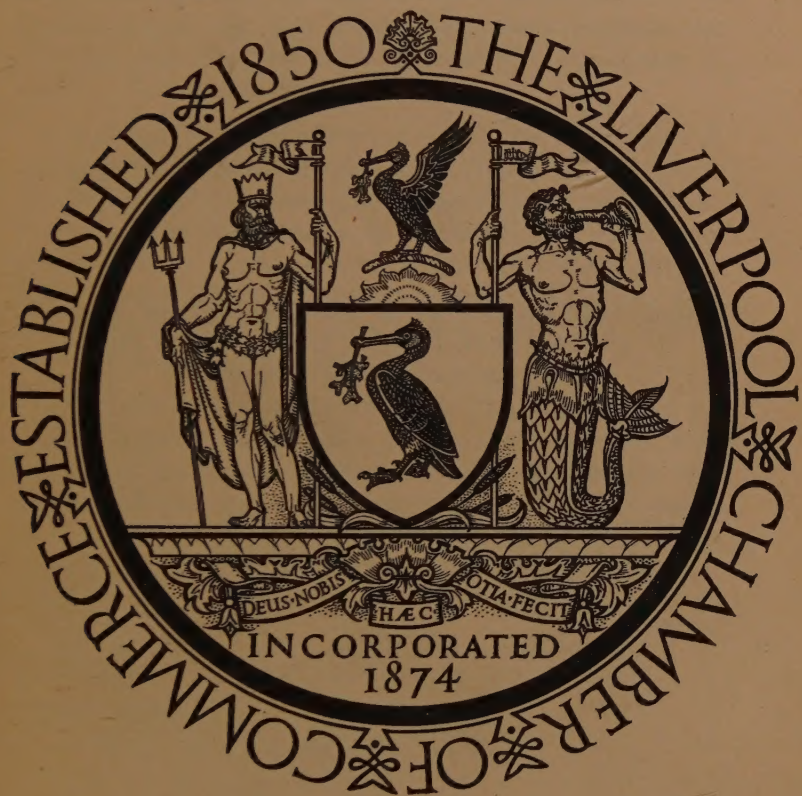
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A CENTURY OF
LIVERPOOL'S COMMERCE



The 17th EARL OF DERBY, K.G., *president from 1910 to 1943*

A Century of Liverpool's Commerce



by

W. A. GIBSON MARTIN

*Printed, bound and published by Charles Birchall and Sons, Ltd.,
17 James Street, Liverpool, 2, in association with
the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce*

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I AM GLAD TO commend this book to all its readers. The long-standing connection of my late Grandfather with the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce gave me a personal interest in its activities even before I succeeded him as President, and the story of the Chamber's development over the past hundred years will spread a knowledge of its work throughout Merseyside.

I welcome this knowledge not only for the picture it will give of the achievements of Victorian Liverpool but also because of its value in the years we have yet to face. There is a tendency today to emphasise the bad points of the past, in a general progress towards improvement, but it would be a fatal mistake to ignore the lessons that our ancestors learned by hard experience and to belittle the successes that they gained.

The book is strictly factual. It shows the stages by which Liverpool's trade grew from a virtually rural background to its present height, and how that growth was encouraged and guided at its meeting place, the Chamber of Commerce. A real knowledge of the past, here as everywhere else, must be of the greatest value for the future.

DERBY

KNOWSLEY,

March, 1950.

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

SO SWIFTLY has civilisation advanced during the past hundred years that to chronicle all important events in any one direction constitutes a task almost as fascinating as it is impracticable. How much more so, then, when one attempts to record within the pages of a single volume all the really significant developments in commerce, shipping and industry, along with appropriate reference to the historical and political background?

Therefore, on completing this history of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce I am keenly aware of many meritorious activities which, on account of space limit, receive only a few lines or, most unfortunately, have been crowded out altogether.

Should the reader fail to discover what he considers adequate reference to his particular sphere, let him be assured that lack of space has compelled the omission, rather than any lack of appreciation; for after my prolonged study of the Chamber's one hundred years' existence I venture to give a positive assurance that the council and members of the Chamber would be the very first to acknowledge gratefully any effort, great or small, direct or indirect, by individuals, philanthropic organisations, trade bodies, public companies, or private firms which has helped to erect and maintain the well-knit fabric of Liverpool's commerce, standing as it does today, firmly based on the great Merseyside port.

One point, however, ought to be made clear. In selecting the material and preparing it for publication the council of the Chamber allowed me perfectly free rein, generously providing a vast amount of data from the Chamber's archives. This data forms the basis of the present volume, although individual parts have been amplified by reference to the appropriate authorities.

I welcome this opportunity of acknowledging with sincere thanks all the willing and courteous co-operation given so ably by the secretary of the Chamber, Lt.-Col. P. G. R. Burford, T.D., M.A., the assistant secretary, Mr John E. Nicholson, and the secretarial staff of the Chamber. Acknowledgments of prompt and efficient assistance must be made also to the staff of the British Museum Reading Room and Manuscript Room, the chief librarian of the Bath Reference Library, Mr. J. F. Smith, F.R.S.A., chief librarian, Liverpool Public Libraries, the management committee of the Liverpool Lyceum, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, Barclays Bank (D. C. & O.), *The Journal of Commerce and Shipping Telegraph*, and the *Liverpool Daily Post and Echo*.

For data about the origin and development of trade organisations generally, I am much indebted to their respective chairmen and secretaries, especially those of the West African Trade, American Chamber of Commerce, Corn Trade Association, Cotton Association, Fruit Trade, Gas Undertaking, Salt Chamber, Seed, Oil, Cake and General Produce Association, Sugar Trade, Timber Trade, Tobacco Trade, and the Underwriters' Association. The joint honorary secretaries of the Merseyside Civic Society also provided most acceptable co-operation.

W. A. G. M.

Liverpool,
31st March, 1950.

CHAPTER ONE

The pivot of Liverpool's Commerce—THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE—Earlier organisations as evidence of the need for a properly-constituted Chamber worthy of the Port.

TO MANY people in Britain today, the principle "Export—or expire" seems quite new, one result of the Second World War during which Britain sacrificed so much wealth overseas that the creation of a new and greatly increased export trade becomes essential for her economic survival.

To those better informed, however, Britain achieved greatness and glory by her export trade, even before Charles II granted a Royal Charter in 1662 to the "Company of Royal Adventurers of England Trading into Africa." While cases may be quoted to prove that "trade follows the flag" no one can deny that in many others "the flag followed trade," notably in certain parts of West Africa where the merchant served unofficially as "Governor," enjoying the respect and loyalty of native peoples to an extent that would astonish critics of the British Empire.

Creating and developing export trade provides ideal scope for that adventuresome spirit so typical of the nineteenth century, for the pioneer blazing a trail inch by inch and foot by foot through the bush, for the much-maligned yet truly patriotic and unselfish "Empire builder." No other country in the world can claim to have nurtured and developed this spirit of adventure to anything like the same extent as Britain; and no other country has achieved the same success in winning the loyalty and affection of millions of people who—knowing nothing whatever of Europe—could only judge Britain and the British by the sterling character, enterprise, and ingenuity of those early pioneers.

Glancing backwards over a hundred years of the export

trade which followed those early efforts, it becomes obvious that Britain achieved greatness through industry and commerce, and that while many manufacturers and to some extent shippers did not claim a place in the category of "exporter" yet almost invariably the activities of such firms played an indirect part—and indeed an indispensable part—in feeding or clothing or housing the scores of thousands of other workers directly responsible for shipping and selling British goods to almost every country in the world. This steadily increasing export trade, naturally enough, found its chief springboard in the Port of Liverpool, ideally situated geographically for exporting to the great consuming countries of the west: and to this day there exists a flourishing Liverpool company whose title emphasises the relative order of importance, "Liverpool and London and Globe," Liverpool being the importer and exporter, and London the financial centre for global trade.

Centrally in Liverpool's trade, the pivot on which virtually all transactions turn, stands the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, an institution of international reputation, now celebrating its centenary. The future, the present, and the past of this Chamber, therefore, far transcend any personal or domestic issue—it reflects naturally and indeed inevitably the hopes and achievements of Liverpool and of the United Kingdom and Empire.

Today, as during the past 100 years, Liverpool's Chamber of Commerce constitutes the meeting-place where gather together in their mutual interests the representatives of Liverpool's many-sided industrial, shipping and commercial activities. As a tree is known by its fruit, so the worth of any meeting-place is judged only by what emerges from it, whether by way of communal decision—the Chamber's traditional function—or of reply to individual problems (as is increasingly the need today), or of following and helping to shape future requirements. In this field of worth, in matters of integrity and reputation, in contacts and the seeking of new fields to conquer, Liverpool's Chamber—

keenly aware of its important rôle—takes intense pride in the knowledge that a century's experience in the service of the industrial and commercial community will prove highly valuable in the crucial years that lie ahead.

When that experience began a hundred years ago the background of industry and commerce consisted of many small, independent, family businesses. No one in those far-off days could have visualised the problems of control and inter-locking interests arising with the growth of combines, monopolies, trade unionism, and State intervention. Such problems, and their inevitable reactions throughout the entire fabric of human relationships, would have astounded the founders of the Chamber; yet in this essential distinction between past and present lies a hundred years of systematic progress.

Prior to the foundation of the Chamber, Liverpool and the United Kingdom had experienced a series of violent changes, social and economic, ending in an era of restriction, of unrest and sheer hunger. All this was swept away, during and after 1850, by a major change of policy which did not and would not tolerate any return to conditions preceding the Industrial Revolution or the Napoleonic Wars (for on every ground, such a return was judged impossible) but on the contrary adapted the principles of freedom and expansion to new and exceptional circumstances which won universal acceptance, even if only on account of their inevitability.

A parallel exists in the present century, during the early part of which Liverpool and the United Kingdom witnessed changes almost equal in violence and just as numerous, bringing in their wake restrictions, unrest, and lack of incentive. Now that the year 1950 has arrived, let the present generation decide if and how the parallel will be completed in the new and exceptional circumstances of today. There can be no turning back, but a knowledge of the past must enable us to glimpse the future more clearly. In this connection one recalls Edmund Burke's profound comment: "People will not look forward to

posterity who never look backward to their ancestry."

As members of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce look forward confidently to prosperity in the years to come, so they look backwards with gratitude and a wholesome respect to their ancestors who, with vision and pertinacity founded the Chamber a hundred years ago, and who erected on that slim foundation an immense commercial non-profit-making structure, the influence of which makes itself felt almost as much in the West African bush, or the wilds of South America, as in the Port of Liverpool.

This great organisation records with fidelity and precision the pulse beats of commerce; and by reason of its constitution and management every influence, favourable or otherwise, and no matter how remote the origin, has its effect upon one section or another, and therefore upon the responsibilities of council, committees and trade sections. So sensitive seems the organisation that if a stone were cast into the placid waters of Lake Bosumtwi, one would expect to see within an hour a ripple recorded in trade cables reaching the West African Section through its normal contacts in Ashanti.

Quite plainly, then, the origin of such a vast and highly complicated, yet democratic and thoroughly efficient organisation, reaching out and reflecting the most minute changes in every part of the globe, must be of considerable interest to the commercial community, particularly as the present volume appears at a time when the Chamber looks back upon a hundred years of consistent service to trade, industry, shipping, banking and insurance, to the Port of Liverpool, and to the country and Empire. Yet the records of the Chamber's first meeting in 1850 read not so much as those of a newly initiated body but rather of one long established and continuing a general policy on which agreement had existed for some time. A study of those early records, in fact, impels the question, "but surely this cannot have been the beginning—what happened before all this?" And the answer is provided by no less a person than Mr. William Blood, secretary to the Chamber from

1863 until his death on 8th September, 1893; he wrote to the editor of the *Liverpool Daily Post*:—

“ Sir, when the present Chamber was established in 1850, it was entirely unknown apparently to the promoters that a similar organisation existed in Liverpool over one hundred years previously. No reference was made to the former Chamber, either in the speeches delivered in the Town Hall on the occasion of the formation of the present Chamber, or in the prospectus issued to the commercial community, so that it was believed that a new institution was brought for the first time under the notice of the merchants and traders of the port.

“ There was a Liverpool Chamber of Commerce in 1774, but so far nothing more is known respecting it. No archives exist. The only fragment of the old body is to be found in ‘Williamson’s Liverpool Directory’ for 8th July, 1774, where a list of the council, or committee as it was called, is given. This list itself is so interesting from the circumstance that it brings down through a century of years from the past some two or three names of high repute, and which sound as household words amongst the present generation, that I venture to give it:—John Dobson (chairman), Nicholas Ashton, Joseph Brookes, Jun., John Chorley, Thomas Case, Edward Chaffers, Joseph Dalters, William Earle, Thomas Falkner, Thomas Fox Croft, William Heywood, Benjamin Heywood, William James, Fraser Ingram, Richard Kent, Alexander Nottingham, Henry Rawlinson, Gill Salter, Thomas Standiforth and William Wallace.

Yours etc.,

WILLIAM BLOOD.

Liverpool, 10th February, 1883.”

The Holt and Gregson manuscripts include a document dated 21st April, 1774, bearing the title “A Draft of an Article for Settling a Chamber of Commerce in Liverpool.”

The *Liverpool Daily Post* of 17th July, 1930, refers to "the common council" which, in April, 1775, ordered "there shall be every year seven common councilmen appointed who shall be called the Committee of Trade of the Town of Liverpool, and shall be invested with full power to order . . . all such matters or things as shall in any way tend to the protection, increase, or advantage of such trade and commerce as it is in the interest of this town to support." A sum of £250 a year was placed at the committee's disposal.

"The committee was re-appointed in the two following years, after which, however, the records contain very few references to its activities, and it does not appear to have survived for any considerable period."

One of Liverpool's many historians refers to a Chamber of Commerce which "existed in Liverpool and it was the custom on every Midsummer's Day for its members to elect a committee." (Brooke's *Liverpool*, 1775-1860).

Vague and nebulous although these references may be, yet undoubtedly all point clearly to a recognition that union means not only strength but action, the pooling of experience, and the binding together of many interests previously without any direct influence upon the conduct of port and city affairs.

The time was to come, however, when the commercial community would combine to form a powerful, democratic organisation, so constituted as to speak with one voice and to act as a single body, not in the interests of any one section but in the wider interests of the port and city and of Britain and the Empire, and indeed of every country in the world which looks to Britain for manufactured goods or as a buyer of raw materials, and which looks to Liverpool as the port organised to handle immense shipments of manufactured goods and raw materials. That organisation, the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, looks back upon one hundred years of energetic and efficient support of every worthwhile commercial development in Liverpool or anywhere else in the world; and it looks forward with

confidence to the times ahead when, after the community utilises its influence in the best way and to the advantage of the whole world, Britain will once more resume her rightful place as one of the great industrial and commercial nations of the world.

CHAPTER TWO

Foundation of THE LIVERPOOL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE —The Charter of Incorporation.

WHEN THE commercial community organised its historic meeting in the Town Hall on 4th February, 1850, and passed a resolution to form a Chamber of Commerce for the Port and City of Liverpool, one-half of Britain's 27,000,000 people still lived in the country, as yet only partially affected by the Industrial Revolution. But the machine had arrived. The power loom, steam engine, steamship, and the railway engine were all to bring about an astounding change in both country and the towns as factories sprang up with unequalled rapidity, and roads, railways, docks, and canals all combined to convey the raw materials and the finished products. Then came the penny post, and the Factory Act of 1847 introducing a ten-hour day for women and persons under 18, followed in 1850 by the death of Robert Peel and the dawn of a new era in British history.

The golden age of free trade had dawned, finding in Liverpool a new and thoroughly competent organisation to handle all the innumerable problems which must follow in the wake of sweeping changes. Who dared prophesy, at that stage in world trade, that not only was Britain to develop into the world's workshop, the world's shipbuilder, the world's carrier, but that the Port of Liverpool was to become a commercial centre of such importance as it is today, handling more export trade than the metropolis itself?

Of that historic meeting, the records say little. Fortunately, however, there still survive a few "notes" by Mr. Alan H. Milne, C.M.G., who, writing about the Chamber in 1918, recalls that the meeting was held under the

auspices of the (then) Mayor of Liverpool, Sir John Bent, and comments that the formation of a Chamber "was a venturesome step in those days, and somewhat notable, as the era of such associations—whether of employer or employee—had not yet arrived. It must be remembered that the business of a firm in the middle of last century was altogether of a family nature, and partners were rarely permitted to give much time to matters out of the direct scope of the firm. At the outset the movement appears to have met with much criticism, inspired by the dread of interference politically, or commercially, with the general trading community."

A year later, however, all opposition admitted itself disarmed; and at the first annual meeting held in February, 1851, Mr. Thomas Berry Horsfall, the president, addressed "a large attendance of commercial gentlemen" in the cotton sales-room, Exchange Buildings. In the course of his address he said:—

"Gentlemen. Twelve months have elapsed since we met under the auspices of the Mayor for the purpose of establishing a Chamber of Commerce; and I think I can truly say that the experience of the past has served to convince those who doubted, of the necessity of such a Chamber—(hear, hear)—and it has also served to remove the objections which were urged against it. (hear, hear.)

"We were told that it was impossible for gentlemen of different political opinions, having different commercial views, to meet and act for a common object and a common good. But what has been the fact? We have met—gentlemen of different commercial views, gentlemen of different political opinions—and we hope our meetings have not been unattended with good. What has been the result? I do not hesitate to say, on behalf of your council, that they have never discussed any political question, nor have their deliberations ever been sullied by selfish interests. (hear, hear.) The report will be read to you, imparting, as it does, the operations

of the past year, showing you briefly on what measures your council has taken action, the measures which are still under its consideration, and I will then ask your opinion on some of the points now before the council, particularly with reference to one which has been noticed in the circular which you have just received—I allude to the subject of income tax. And it is right, gentlemen, that I should state in the outset that there was some difference of opinion in your council as to whether the subject of the income tax was a legitimate subject for their consideration. I confess I have no misgivings myself. I think it is one for your consideration, as affecting particularly the commercial interests of this town and the commercial interests of the Empire. (applause.)”

In passing, it may prove of interest to record the president's views on a tax which to this day arouses much controversy, both as to its incidence and severity. He stated later on in the same meeting :—

“ The income tax is not looked upon as one of the general taxes of the country, or as a permanent tax. It is a temporary tax. We do not go to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and ask him to repeal the income tax; we have no necessity to do that. It expires in April next, and it is for you to say, through your representatives, whether you are willing that it should be re-enacted . . . The income tax is odious in its character, unjust in its principle, inquisitorial in its operation.”

Reverting to part of the first president's speech just quoted in which he referred to “ the commercial interests of this town and the commercial interests of the Empire,” these are the dual interests to which all subsequent presidents have given their undivided main attention, and which have guided the deliberations of all members since first defined almost a century ago. Of course, as the records frankly admit, there were heated disputes, and on occasions the members would not hesitate to express completely opposite views on problems of the day; but at all

times the Chamber's discussions maintained a remarkably high level. The Chamber itself can claim total freedom from political wire-pulling or prejudice in favour of one interest to the detriment of any others, or neglect of a single issue, important or otherwise, affecting its dual interests—the City of Liverpool and the Empire.

As might be expected, the new Chamber found itself faced almost immediately with demands for better and more extensive docking facilities, for more rapid handling of cargoes, and for a quicker turn-round of ships altogether. A dock committee appears to have existed from the Chamber's earliest days, and records of the first annual meeting refer to a dispute between the dock committee and the dock porters, and to a compromise (negotiated by the Chamber) being accepted as mutually satisfactory to the committee and the porters.

In 1850 the Cunard Company enjoyed almost a monopoly of transatlantic trade, carrying mails between Liverpool and North America and also between Halifax, New York, and Bermuda. America's first attempt to compete with British steamships having proved a failure, Congress granted a subsidy which brought into being the Collins Line operating four ships of wood, each 3,000 register tons, of 800 h.p., and having a beam of 45 ft. which necessitated special arrangements for docking in Liverpool. Later, one ship, the *Arctic*, collided off Cape Race in 1854, and another, the *Pacific*, was lost at sea; after this, the first American attempt to compete seriously with British supremacy on the North Atlantic was abandoned.

In due course, however, another challenger arose in the Inman Line which became part of the Morgan combine, and again the attempt failed. Some time later the National Steam Navigation Company maintained a weekly service between Liverpool and New York, establishing a record trip of 6½ days, Queenstown to Sandy Hook, but this line, too, disappeared.

Meantime Liverpool merchants developed their trade with South America, the Far East and Africa. The

handling of increasing imports and exports raised problems which the Chamber could only ventilate, making a strong request to the appropriate body for a speedy and satisfactory solution. But ventilated those problems were; and with such effect that, sooner or later, some positive action resulted which (lacking an organisation with the Chamber's status and non-political basis) might have taken years instead of weeks or months to achieve.

Some indication of the problems, involving so much delay and difficulty, which confronted exporters and importers at this time may be obtained by realising that all this swiftly-expanding sea traffic had to be handled by a dock system based on the original Old Dock, comprising a water area of some four acres formed originally by constructing a river lock and wall across the entrance to a small pond, and had remained unaltered since 1715. It occupied the site where there stood, until 1941, the Liverpool Customs House, and at its maximum could accommodate no more than 100 ships at a time. From this Old Dock was developed the enclosed dock system on Merseyside, but from the very beginning there existed much dissatisfaction amongst the shipping community insofar as such development consistently lagged behind the needs of the port.

Individually and through the Chamber, those using port facilities—such as they were—voiced strong criticism about the various administrative bodies which controlled the dock property, and finally, in 1858, an act of Parliament created the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board consisting of twenty-eight members (twenty-four elected by dock ratepayers and four appointed by the Government) who receive no remuneration for their services.

From 1858 onwards, therefore, exporters and importers have been admirably served by a dock organisation which compares favourably with anything of its kind in the world. The present administration does its utmost to anticipate the needs of dock users, a policy followed since it assumed control of the port's sea traffic. As ships increased in size, so the demands for larger docks had to

be anticipated, a striking example being the construction of a dock entrance for ships of 10,000 tons in 1879 although no ship exceeding 4,500 tons existed at that time. Again, the Sandon half-tide dock entrance, designed for vessels of 30,000 tons, originated in 1901 when no ship using the port exceeded 10,000 tons. The rapid growth of sea traffic handled by the port may be judged from the fact that within 30 years from 1858 the tonnage of vessels paying dock tonnage and harbour dues had more than doubled. As for exports, their value in 1856 amounted to £54,000,000, but this had more than doubled by 1871.

Yet a port comprises much more than ships and a good dock system. Just as a play at the theatre involves supporting the stage and the players with a complete organisation of many different specialists, such as electricians and make-up artists, musicians and call-boys, scene-shifters and programme-sellers, so the Port of Liverpool found it necessary to develop what appeared merely ancillary services little more than a hundred years ago, but reveal themselves today as immense industries, each with its own technique and trade associations, apart from constituting an integral part of a complete shipping organisation enjoying an enviable reputation in every other country in the world and forming a model on which so many other and newer ports have been based.

That the ideal of an all-embracing shipping service for all British manufacturers and for all British industry guided and at times inspired those pioneers of a hundred years ago becomes crystal clear as one studies the transactions of the early years and gains some understanding of the difficulties of the times. Admittedly, there may not appear anything of this ideal in the speeches and frank comments of the first president, Mr. Thomas Berry Horsfall, Mayor of Liverpool in 1847-1848, and a Member of Parliament, and the Chamber's main contact with the counsels of the nation. Yet he and the founders originally had a fine idea of unity as an essential of strength, and although opinion proved by no means unanimous at the time, the

Chamber obtained enough support to enrol 345 members during its first year, a thoroughly creditable proportion of those then engaged in commerce.

This original membership consisted almost entirely of merchants, as local manufactures hardly existed apart from seed-crushing and certain food-processing which had been carried on for many years at the point where vessels discharged those raw materials: steam and steel had not yet begun to influence either shipping or shipbuilding to any extent. But the original members constituted a thoroughly representative body of undoubted authority, swiftly gathering the confidence of itself as a Chamber and of the whole trading community as their mouth-piece. Within a remarkably short time results from the Chamber's initial work more than justified the fondest hopes of those sturdy, self-confident, successful merchants. "Unity as an essential of strength" served the Chamber admirably in those early days, as it does today.

First ancillary to a complete shipping service for the great consuming and manufacturing country which Britain was to become—and no one foresaw this more clearly than Mr. Horsfall—is land transport. Not only did it prove necessary on many occasions to urge better and quicker services for both goods and passengers, but the charges for various types of traffic required continual supervision and revision, especially in view of the competition developing between one port and another.

Despite increased railway lines serving all Liverpool's docks, the employing of new sidings for the loading and discharging of cargoes, and the provision of new warehouse accommodation on quite a large scale, dock congestion continually embarrassed the shipping community as goods arrived in greater and still greater volume—the Free Trade hall-mark of prosperity. Britain's meagre 7,000 miles of railway, although linking certain industrial areas with Liverpool, left large areas untapped. Goods from Carlisle, for example, had to go via Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and west of a line running from Chester via Birmingham to Gloucester

the railway map showed a complete blank—*Wales!* A railway from Lancaster, with branches from Fleetwood and Blackburn, and from Manchester and Glossop with a north and south connection from St. Helens and Widnes, and the Crewe-Birmingham-Watford line to London, proved quite inadequate to deal with the swiftly mounting traffic from and to the Port of Liverpool.

Month after month the Chamber's council itself, in addition to much detail work by the Home Trade committee, dealt with questions of access to the docks by rail, the comparative rates of rail and canal carriage, the Birkenhead Railway Bill, cartage rates in Liverpool, and the various individual bills presented to Parliament to grant new powers to certain lines or to construct new lines. As an example of the attitude assumed by Liverpool merchants in 1855 there may be cited a comment on the proposal to amalgamate the London & Yorkshire Railway with that known as the East Lancashire; "We hope that some arrangements may be made . . . to secure the interests of commerce of the port in regard to its communications with the interior, by the adoption of reasonable charges." Earlier in the discussion another member of the Chamber expressed misgivings lest "the interests of commerce be sacrificed to a monopoly."

The Chamber achieved an unexpected success in having the rates for conveyance of grain reduced from 8s. 4d. to 6s. 8d. between Liverpool and Manchester; this concession, to one trade alone, involved so many conditions as to render it virtually inoperative. Petitions to the Commons proved ineffective in so many other cases, however, that the Mayor of Liverpool summoned a town's meeting to debate the whole matter of railway rates and the unfair treatment of Liverpool as a port: simultaneously, the council passed a minute stating: "The (railway) carriage question . . . is one of the most vital and important on which our attention has been engaged; and while we do not disguise the nature and magnitude of the opposition . . . we shall continue our most zealous exertions to secure success."

On the other hand, cases may be found to suggest that at times a reduction in rates could be secured without any difficulty whatever. For example, the Cleveland Iron Masters' Association appealed to the Chamber for support in their claim for lower rates of carriage to Liverpool. The association stressed that if it could obtain rates to Liverpool as to South Wales, it would send vast quantities of pig iron for the American and "distant markets". The Chamber in an unusually optimistic communication assured the association that they (the Chamber) had already made application for a reduction in rates, "and in some cases have been successful."

This optimism must have been well-founded, for with the aid of Middlesbrough Chamber, the important iron smelting industry was offered railway rates to Liverpool on precisely the same terms as those operating to South Wales. A minute records, in concluding the matter, "... in a short time a very extensive trade may be expected between that locality (the iron smelting district) and the Port of Liverpool."

While doing their utmost to obtain justice and good service from the railway companies, Liverpool merchants believed that the railway companies had a full-time job on hand, and therefore should not be permitted to engage in any extraneous undertaking, such as the operation of steamships on rivers or at sea. Ignoring the fact that such activities might and most probably would compete with the everyday business of members of the Chamber, opposition to the proposal to repeal part of the order prohibiting operating of steamships by railway companies took a most dignified and unprejudiced form; so much so, indeed, that it brought about the withdrawal of the bill designed to confer steamship-operating power on the railway companies.

The battle for fair and equitable railway rates continued for years. At one time, after a Royal Commission had been appointed to report on the whole matter, Mr. Horsfall, M.P., (first president, and later the Chamber's

representative in a deputation to the Board of Trade) received an invitation to address the Chamber on railway rates. He felt obliged to preface his address with an intimation that as he was a member of this Royal Commission and as the commission had not yet made its report, he could make no reference to what had transpired; yet with considerable adroitness he spoke at length on a subject of which he possessed deep knowledge, conveying to this select yet representative audience his personal views in a skilfully non-controversial way.

Chambers of other towns looked hopefully to Liverpool Chamber in their efforts to obtain redress in this—to them—unjust and indeed inconsistent railway rates policy. The Macclesfield Chamber protested vigorously against the high rates charged on silk goods while the railway authorities repudiated liability for damage, but the Liverpool Chamber's plea for special consideration proved ineffective.

A proposal to amalgamate any of the railway companies did not fail to arouse grave suspicions, and in commenting upon any such proposals the Chamber assumed an attitude of concern for the national interest, considering the matter from the anticipated effect upon Liverpool commerce and, therefore, on the exports and imports of the country; yet almost simultaneously the Chamber decided to adopt a policy of amalgamation itself, merging its two railway committees into one. This enabled the Chamber to present still stronger opposition to injustices in railway rates, an amalgamation following as an inevitable sequence upon the policy of "Unity as an essential of strength."

During all this time, however, ugly shadows gathered on the fair scene of progress in docks, shipping, and railway developments. Admittedly the Liverpool merchants' gaze directed westwards and contemplating—at times with a certain complacency—the vast markets of Africa, the Americas, and rich islands promising almost unlimited scope for trade, did not concern themselves unduly about the Crimean War: most Liverpool people appeared to agree with the comment that Britain gained nothing what-

ever in the war except the development of nursing reforms due to Florence Nightingale. Nor did the Indian Mutiny divert attention from Liverpool's promising markets and their cultivation. And, naturally enough, Liverpool citizens readily accepted a Liverpool man in William Ewart Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer, giving a particularly warm welcome to his doctrine of "peace, retrenchment, and reform." To remove trade barriers and convert Britain into a Free Trade country—what could better suit the trade and commerce of a great port swiftly growing more and more prosperous?

But this continually expanding trade demanded immense sums of money, and soon the results of widespread overtrading made themselves evident throughout Britain's financial structure. Following the railway panics of 1847, with their wild gambling in railway stocks, undue credit inflation, a bad harvest and poor potato crops which led to exceptional imports of corn and a heavy export of gold, came further and more serious troubles a decade later when the Bank Act had to be suspended for a second time owing to the combined effect of "reckless overtrading at home and a commercial and financial collapse in the United States," as a well-known banking authority phrased it. This, of course, involved a heavy drain on British bullion, crippling many banks and compelling one large discount house to close its doors with the knowledge that it owed its creditors £5,000,000. To stave off national bankruptcy the Bank Act was suspended for a second time, notes far in excess of the normal limit being issued to meet the emergency.

That Liverpool merchants, especially those adversely affected by the crises, viewed the country's financial position with some apprehension, becomes obvious as one glances through the Chamber's records. Still more obvious, however, the Liverpool merchants showed an anxiety on behalf of the port's trade and commerce whereas London concerned itself with finance and little else.

Without making any adverse criticisms of London banks

and London financiers, one might well conclude that in London finance had become an end in itself (which must be admitted as perfectly natural, London having been long regarded as the financial centre of the world) whereas the Liverpool merchants looked upon finance as merely a means to an end, that end being commerce, industry, and trade: after all, of what value is the existence and organisation of a great port without a great flow of exports and imports? Therefore finance must be relegated to its proper duty, viz.: the handmaid of trade. Thus, after 1857's bank failures, and all through the subsequent years which were to bring additional financial crises, the Chamber discussed many different proposals, examined their principles, estimated the probable effect upon the flow of trade, and consulted every available source of information and every acknowledged authority; then having reached a decision the Chamber endeavoured (usually with considerable success) to focus public attention upon the urgent necessity for making changes in the law so as to give effect to its decision.

An investigation into the laws of bankruptcy, beginning in 1854, continued more or less without a break for fifteen years, during which period a special committee of the Chamber dealt exhaustively with questions on the subject sent to the committee by the Royal Commissioners. Then followed a discussion with the London Law Amendment Society, after which both the Chamber and the society realised the need for sweeping changes in the bankruptcy laws and their administration. The Chamber and other Liverpool bodies supported and generously contributed to a new committee—the Mercantile Law Committee for the United Kingdom; and in due course this committee prepared a draft bill to consolidate and amend the bankruptcy laws as a whole. The bill, although it reached the Commons and obtained its second reading, did not become law, but it prepared the way for a Government bill which, after much delay owing to serious omissions, was introduced by the Law Officers of the Crown in 1866. Known briefly as the Consolidation Bill, it consolidated the law relating

to bankruptcy in England and abolished imprisonment for debt on final process, contained 317 clauses and 31 schedules, and received the qualified approval of the Chamber's Commercial Law Committee, the chairman at that time being Mr. Philip Rathbone of Rathbone Martin & Company, the insurance brokers.

The committee, while approving of certain parts of the bill, suggested several amendments. The Attorney General expressed agreement, and emphasised his willingness to modify the bill in any way that would give greater satisfaction to trade and commercial bodies. In this connection, too, it ought to be recorded that the Chamber consulted many influential Chambers of Commerce on the Continent, obtaining thoroughly comprehensive and highly valuable information on the foreign laws of bankruptcy which, after translation and the preparation of a digest, was submitted to the Government.

Ultimately this bill was withdrawn; yet the Chamber still held to its strong convictions and therefore requested the Disraeli administration to re-introduce the bill without delay, the demand for reform having grown in strength and urgency after a special meeting of merchants and bankers had been held early in 1868 to consider not only the bankruptcy laws but also the laws relating to commercial credit and morality. Yet neither the strongly-worded resolution from this representative meeting, nor a bill introduced in 1868 with 503 clauses and supported by Lord Chancellor Cairns, achieved any positive result. During Gladstone's Ministry, however, a measure, thoroughly acceptable to most parties, actually did reach the Statute Book. Thus the whole commercial community in Britain, as well as bankers and the legal profession, benefited by a far-reaching reform, almost entirely due to a fifteen years' campaign waged with pertinacity and sagacity by the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce.

Other reforms also engaged the attention of Liverpool merchants at this time. The law relating to merchant shipping had long appeared unsatisfactory, and Mr. S. R.

Graves, M.P., emphasised how impracticable were the seven or eight acts, with a total of over 700 clauses, many being obsolete while most others required modernising. Two years later Lord Sandon formulated a measure designed to amend and consolidate all the various Shipping Acts.

In 1870 a bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to merchant shipping and navigation was introduced by the Government and immediately received attention by a specially constituted committee comprising representatives of the Chamber, the Shipping and Underwriting Associations, and the Law Society of Liverpool. This committee's report caused the council of the Chamber to state: "that in view of the importance of the questions dealt with, and the imperfect manner in which it (the code) meets some of the most pressing wants in connection with the measure, further legislation should be postponed until the whole bill shall have had the consideration of a committee of the House of Commons or of a Royal Commission." The bill, therefore, was withdrawn, amended, and re-introduced in 1871, after which another special committee's report resulted in another withdrawal of the measure.

Legislation affecting shipping continued to engage the concern of merchants for the next few years, and much of the good work accomplished during the previous decade resulted in the Merchant Shipping and Passenger Acts Amendments Bill passed in 1873; that same year introduced the so-called "Plimsoll era" providing Mr. Philip Rathbone with a topic of the utmost importance for his speech to the annual meeting of the Chamber in February, 1874. When read today, that speech is a model of dignity and weighty, convincing argument, and defence of the shipping industry.

Special committees during this period also gave much thought to other matters affecting the law and shipping as, for example, collisions at sea, general average deposits, particular average, etc.

Amidst all these weighty matters affecting the everyday

life of people obtaining their livelihood and engaged in business in the Port of Liverpool, and also the welfare of everyone in Britain as the country of Free Trade, and while dealing in minute detail with the general administration of docks, railways, shipping and the law relating thereto, the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce gradually increased its services to the individual callings of its members and, simultaneously, attracted new members by those same services.

Originally the Chamber comprised "deputies" from the African, General Brokers', Wine and Spirit, Shipowners', Warehousekeepers', and West India Associations, and from the American Chamber of Commerce, with some 21 leading citizens (apparently mostly directly connected with shipping, insurance, banking, and the law) and a president, vice-president, secretary, and the Mayor *ex officio*. Two years later the Member of Parliament for the borough, and the member for the southern division of the county were included *ex officio*. The East India and China Association appeared in the list for 1853, the Cotton Brokers' Association in 1854, and the Corn Trade and Steamship Associations in 1855, while two vice-presidents had their names included in the 1858 list, and the Salt Chamber appeared for the first time in 1861.

All these interests, fused into one main body operating for the welfare and prosperity of the port as a whole, proved capable of taking the widest possible view of every matter brought to its notice, whether it be a proposed new railway in South Brazil, the conveyance of mails to Australia, the effect of the Danish blockade, or the proposal to remove the head post office in Liverpool to a site highly inconvenient "for the mercantile classes."

One of the Chamber's first successes lay in Western China; after a memorial forwarded to the Government praying that trade might be opened through Burmese territory from the British port of Rangoon, a Treaty of Commerce resulted whereby British merchants received a permit to settle in Burma, and Burmese merchants in

British territory. A further memorial received favourable attention, praying that a survey be made to ascertain the most direct route for a railway or road for conveying goods and passengers between Rangoon and Kian Hung, and indicating that if such a survey were made then private enterprise would soon establish direct communication between British territory and Western China.

Later the Chamber, having appealed to H.M. Government on three separate occasions for a report on this route, expressed deep regret that H.M. Government had taken no steps towards making the recommended survey, and that having reconsidered the proposal in every respect the Chamber believed:

“That the commercial community are deeply interested in . . . a safe, direct, and easy communication with the Shan States and Western China from the port of Rangoon, and in the same extension by the same route, of the Indo-European telegraph to Hong Kong and the Chinese open ports; and being further confirmed by that report in their belief of the practicability of constructing a railway from Rangoon across British Burma and the Shan States of the King of Ava; your council resolved to memorialize her Majesty’s Secretaries of State for India and Foreign Affairs in favour of a prompt and careful survey . . . and to pray that her Majesty will send an envoy to his Majesty the King of Ava, instructed to arrange with the Burman Government for such survey. Your council have also requested the co-operation of the Members of Parliament for the borough, the county, and for Birkenhead, on a deputation to the India Office, promoted by the East India and China Association, in furtherance of the prayer of their memorial.”

Another Government department, to whose head the Chamber felt compelled to address protests from time to time, was the General Post Office. The postal services, at home and abroad, gave frequent cause for complaint in Great Britain as well as elsewhere, and the Chamber of Commerce of Geneva invited co-operation from the Liver-

pool Chamber in trying to extend existing arrangements for certain types of mail from Switzerland to France, so that Britain also might benefit. But an appeal to the British Postmaster General only brought the type of reply which—alas—has become too frequent in the experience of those seeking improved service today: "... no advantage would be gained ..."

The request for altering despatch dates for mails to America from Liverpool did not meet with success either; but ultimately perseverance won the day, and Friday became the sailing date to New York, largely due, it is thought, to the adverse effect which work on Saturday afternoon had on volunteer training, a point stressed by the Altcar Rifle Club.

While urging many reforms in other spheres of commercial activity, Liverpool did not hesitate to recognise with a dignity befitting the great port any event which would accelerate trade with overseas ports. For example, when the steamship *Great Eastern* returned to Liverpool after successfully laying cables across the Atlantic, a deputation went aboard the ship and after presenting a congratulatory address to the commander (Captain Anderson) invited him and his officers to a public banquet, with the President of the Board of Trade in the chair, amongst other highly distinguished guests on the occasion being Lord Stanley, the (then) Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

This historic banquet was one of several functions that threw vivid splashes of colour across the pages of Liverpool's history. The Chamber gave banquets in honour of the Burmese and Japanese Embassies on their first arrival in Great Britain; the Emperor of Brazil granted a private audience to the Chamber's president and secretary, and the Khedive of Egypt conveyed a direct invitation to the Chamber to be represented at the official opening of the Suez Canal.

At this time, too, the house of Stanley commenced its long, close, and immensely valuable part in the direction

of the Chamber's affairs. Lord Stanley, M.P., at one time Secretary of State for India and subsequently the 15th Earl of Derby, attended the annual meeting in 1864. Then Mr. Gladstone, son of a Liverpool merchant and born in Liverpool, served for three years as a member of the Chamber's council.

The Chamber moved its headquarters in 1867, from the former Exchange Buildings to larger premises in Brown's Buildings, continuing the previous arrangement of sharing accommodation with the Cotton Brokers' Association.

One more domestic item might be mentioned as indicating the risks run during those early days before the widespread adoption of the internal audit system: the accounts for the year 1855 show against subscriptions the heading "DEDUCT: embezzled by the office boy . . ." It may be consoling for today's members of the Chamber to be assured that no similar entry appears during the remaining 95 years of the Chamber's existence.

Summing up this initial period, one might say that although wars interfered with developments overseas as well as at home, not until the American Civil War began to affect trade in cotton and the corresponding exports of textiles, did people really come to understand that war could no longer be regarded as a mere movement of armies in some far distant part of the globe. Liverpool's vital interest in cotton may be judged from the fact that cotton textile exports at this period formed almost the total export trade of the port. Thus the prosperity of Liverpool received a positive, although happily temporary, setback, but that faded into comparative insignificance compared with the miserable plight of inland Lancashire.

As a remarkable instance of history repeating itself, it must be recorded how "bundles for Britain" was foreshadowed when an American ship *George Griswold* sailed for Liverpool, at the height of the Civil War, laden with provisions for the relief of distressed mill operatives in Lancashire.

More remote consequences of the Civil War compelled

the enterprising industrialists to seek cotton in other parts of the world. Then the rights of neutral nations, and the treatment of their merchandise at sea, plus the problems of foreign enlistment resulting from the famous *Alabama* case, became of so great importance as to cause the Chamber to press for a system of international law.

But of those years, perhaps the most significant development was a big expansion in the manufacture of goods in America: in due course this resulted in direct competition between manufacturers in Britain and in America for markets in countries not so highly industrialised. Further competition resulted after the Franco-Prussian war; and from the growth of a united and progressive Germany there emerged another competitor in the world's markets. If this last threat appeared first of all in the comparatively peaceful realm of toy-making, it was not to be confined to such a realm for long: indeed there was voiced at one annual meeting, towards the close of this period "a need for consolidating our strength and our resources by bringing into closer union our Colonial possession with the Mother Country."

Proceedings at the "Twenty-fourth Annual General Meeting of the Members of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce" concluded with the following highly important item:—

"THE INCORPORATION OF THE CHAMBER

"Your council, no less than their predecessors, have felt strongly that their action and influence have frequently been seriously impeded by the Chamber having no *locus standi* as a body before Parliament or its committees, though always in their petitions praying to be heard in support of them. This was especially felt to be the case in 1864, and again in the last three years, when the questions of railway rates of carriage and railway companies' amalgamation so largely engaged their attention. The wish, so often expressed within, as well as outside, the councils, that so important a step as the removal of the disability referred to by the incorporation

of the Chamber should not be lost sight of, has not been carried out hitherto solely from the heavy cost that would have attended it. Facilities now exist, however, for registration and incorporation at less expense, and a resolution has been come to to delay no longer the taking of a step which, they venture to hope, will accord general satisfaction to the members of the chamber.

“It is with pleasure, therefore, that your council lay before you this day, with a recommendation for your approval and adoption, a draft memorandum and articles of association, carefully drawn up under their direction by their solicitors, Messrs. Jevons and Ryley.

“Besides the increased efficiency and influence, and facilities in obtaining at all times a *locus standi*, other advantages will accrue to the Chamber in being invested with the privileges incident to corporations created by Royal Charter.

“Although the costs and fees attending incorporation are now much under what they would have been some years ago, still the amount is more than the funds of the Chamber are able to bear, and, under these circumstances, your council have also the pleasure of presenting to the Chamber their deed of incorporation without trenching upon the Chamber’s funds.”

Resolutions giving effect to the proposals to accept incorporation were then passed, seconded and carried unanimously, and the Chamber duly received its charter as an incorporated body. Thus came to a triumphant conclusion the Chamber’s first era, a period of almost a quarter of a century and one of immense importance to Liverpool and, indeed, of the country and Empire: a period in which was securely laid the foundation of a world-wide export and import trade based on the great Port of Liverpool.

CHAPTER THREE

The Incorporated Chamber—Early Associations sending Deputies—Growth of the Chamber—Trade Bodies existing prior to the Chamber's Formation and Subsequently Obtaining Affiliation.

IN THE growth of a great port, such as Liverpool has become, it appears inevitable that while certain sections of commerce and industry recognised the value of a Chamber of Commerce and not only encouraged its formation but contributed largely to its funds and to its development as a body authorised to speak and act for the commercial community as a whole, other sections remained aloof for a time but ultimately requested affiliation; others again seemed unconvinced of the benefit of commercial unity and allowed decades to elapse before lending their practical support.

Yet all these bodies, representing commercial activities in so many different categories, have contributed to the prosperity of Liverpool and, directly or otherwise, to the growth and development of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce: and the Chamber of Commerce has been instrumental in obtaining many benefits for them, indirectly or otherwise, in that what helps one, helps all.

A complete history of every trade section and trade organisation being beyond the scope of the present volume, a number of different commercial activities have been selected as representative, indicating in convincing fashion something of the enterprise and pertinacity so typical of Liverpool's leading business men during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

When the Chamber held its initial meeting as an incorporated body, the records indicate that deputies represented eleven of the most important trade associations,

viz.: the African Association, American Chamber of Commerce, Corn Trade Association, Cotton Brokers' Association, East India & China Association, General Brokers' Association, Salt Chamber of Commerce, Ship-owners' Association, West India Association, Wine & Spirit Association, and the Underwriters' Association. Committees, all sitting on different days of the week, included the home trade, manufactures, mines, postal and telegraph; the colonial and foreign trade; commercial law; railways, transit, and Parliamentary: and Customs, dock arrangements, and exports. In addition there existed a general purposes committee, another dealing with finance, library and members, and a third which undertook responsibility for reports. Of the associations, at least two appear to have been in active operation before the Chamber itself.

According to a memorandum issued with the approval of the president and vice-president of the Liverpool Corn Exchange Ltd., there seem to have existed "shareholders" in "The Liverpool Corn Exchange" in 1810. This memorandum refers to an indenture of 1858, made by some unknown corn merchants in Liverpool, in which occurs a reference to a previous indenture dated 11th December, 1810. Both indentures mention a building named the Liverpool Corn Exchange, a property "in or near to the streets called Brunswick Street, Chorley Street, and Old Ropery." The indenture dated 1858 recorded that as there had been an increase in trade, it would be well if additional shareholders were created. From this has been drawn the inference that some grouping of corn merchants existed as long ago as 1810.

Incidentally, the Corn Exchange Buildings occupied the site of the original Corn Exchange, an island property which was totally destroyed by enemy action in May, 1941. It included an apartment known as the Atlantic News Room, in which trading in wheat for future delivery formed the chief feature. Adjoining this newsroom was a spot market where took place twice weekly meetings of merchants, brokers, country corn dealers, flour and

provender dealers, and representatives of allied trades. The top floor was devoted to clearing house, board-room, sample rooms, and arbitration rooms.

The first association of corn merchants in Liverpool, formed in 1853, became incorporated in 1886. The present association, the Liverpool Corn Trade Association Ltd., however, became an incorporated body in 1897.

Originally the Liverpool corn trade, based on purely local supplies, extended to Ireland and the south of Scotland. After abolition of the corn laws and the failure of home-grown crops to keep pace with the increased demand for foodstuffs due to a steady increase in the population, Britain began to import from America and soon (as the Prairie provinces opened up) from Canada as well. Later the Argentine and Australia contributed on a large scale. Thus for many years these four countries exported large supplies of wheat and coarse grains including maize. In addition, however, supplies have been received periodically from Russia, and the Danubian states, and certain types of grains have also been obtained from the Middle and Far East. At one time India—before her own swift increase in population—exported wheat and pulse, while China has occasionally exported cereals and pulse.

From the beginning of Britain's import of grains, Liverpool has proved an admirable port for the discharge of grain and grain-products exported by the western world, as the demand came originally, and still does, from the heavily populated industrial centres of Lancashire, Cheshire and North Wales. With improved inland transport, however, the range of distribution widened so that it now includes a larger part of North Wales, the Midlands, the North of England, the South of Scotland, and Ireland. The opening of the Manchester Ship Canal enabled sea-going vessels to take their cargoes direct into Manchester.

Originally the local flour mills employed wind-driven machinery, one of the oldest occupying the present site of the North Shore Mill. With improved dock facilities, however, and especially the deep-water berths, millers from

other districts were attracted to the Mersey, and gradually Liverpool became and still remains the greatest flour-milling port in the world. It owes much to the enterprise of the Liverpool Grain Storage & Transit Company whose silos at the Brunswick, Coburg, and Alexandra docks are amongst the largest and most up-to-date in the whole country. But it owes a still greater debt to generations of far-seeing, enterprising, and risk-bearing merchants without whom Liverpool could not have attained and held its position as one of the four great terminal grain markets of the world.

As an international market, Liverpool attracts hedging business from every part of the globe, and as long as the trade remained in private hands there always existed a steady and well-regulated flow of wheat and other cereals to Britain: this could not indeed be otherwise, owing to the competitive and economic circumstances of the trade as a whole. Consequently Britain earned very considerable invisible exports arising from grain shipping, insurance, and brokerage business.

Although originally conducted on spot terms, the corn trade adopted contracts on "shipment and delivery" terms, but this has been replaced more recently by c.i.f. terms, until under Government control f.o.b. terms have been in force. Trading in wheat for future delivery began as far back as 1883, and a "Californian contract" first appeared in 1886. Then as other exporting countries entered the market, the futures contract had adjustment made to meet circumstances as they arose: wheats tenderable in the period immediately prior to 1939 comprised American Red, (including Canadian Manitobas), and Australian and Argentine.

A factual *Wheat Study* published by Stanford University, California, in March, 1936, stated:—"For many good reasons the Liverpool futures prices—more nearly than those in any other single market—represent world price levels."

A further publication by the same university two years

later, *Study on Wheat Futures Prices and Trading at Liverpool since 1886* concludes:—"The history of the Liverpool futures contract is one of progressive improvement. A prime objective in the evolution of the contract has been adaption to the needs for hedging wheat in channels of international trade. From the standpoint of volume of trading or volume of open contracts, the Liverpool futures market ranks far below Chicago and Winnipeg. It is pre-eminent in balanced reflection rather than in generation of price influences. A large proportion of its business originates with hedgers, and with speculators who take a long view of the price outlook. Although peculiarly vulnerable to 'corners' and 'squeezes,' Liverpool has succeeded remarkably in avoiding such manipulation."

During the First World War the corn trade was controlled on behalf of the Government by the Royal Commission on Wheat Supplies. After the war ended, the corn trade reverted to its previous management under private enterprise. In 1939 all firms engaged in the trade—plans having been made in advance with the Government—were taken over and controlled by the Ministry of Food.

The present membership of the Liverpool Corn Trade Association Ltd. includes shippers, merchants, brokers, dealers, and flour and provender millers. The association forms one of the constituents of the National Federation of Corn Trade Associations, a body representing the corn trade of the United Kingdom in all questions of national importance.

Another early trading body, about whose origin little has survived, is the General Brokers' Association which, by a series of amalgamations, gradually developed into the present Seed, Oil, Cake, and General Produce Association, Inc. (incorporating the Liverpool United General Produce Association Ltd. and the Seed, Oil & Cake Trade Association). This association appears to have existed in some form as early as 1838, Mr. T. M. Meyers serving as secre-

tary from that date to 1863; the early body having been reorganised in 1855, it became incorporated as a limited company in 1892.

Today the industry imports considerably over half-a-million tons of raw materials per annum, and has a direct interest in cocoa, palm kernels, palm oil, ground nuts, copra oil, tallow, whale oil, linseed, to mention only a few of the chief items in which are involved over 300 importers, manufacturers, and dealers. In addition, many large firms engage in the compound cake industry, and others in the manufacture of margarine and soap.

But how, one may well ask, did seed-crushing and all its accompanying operations happen to develop to such an immense extent in Britain which has no oil-bearing seed or nuts indigenous to the country? A fair question, and one which focuses attention once again on the pertinacity and vision of those pioneers to whom Liverpool owes such a debt. Yet unexpected although it may be, the industry did not originate in Liverpool, for a mill existed in the Midlands about 1730; and another operated on the Ribble, near the Port of Preston, *circa* 1768. Hull established mills for crushing seeds imported from Russia and the Baltic ports. Liverpool's first mill did not come into the picture until about 1790; it occupied a site on the breast of a hill so that wind power might be utilised to the maximum. Little did those industrial pioneers realise that a century-and-a-half later, almost on the same site as their first mill, there would arise a great new edifice of Woolton stone in which Kings and commoners would worship—the cathedral now a landmark as ships enter the Mersey and make for their berths heavily laden with precious cargoes on a scale far beyond the imagination of seed-crushers in 1790 or—come to that—of 1890!

The first mill to be erected, about 1804, near the docks may have been in Oil St., off Great Howard St. From that date the industry progressed and prospered in methods, machinery, technique, and output, the Dutch stamper giving place to the hydraulic box press, which in turn was

replaced by hydraulic mechanism, with detail improvements year by year and decade by decade, right until today.

Like many other ancient industries (steel, for example, and gas manufacture), in seed crushing some of the most successful men were those who transferred their activities from entirely different spheres. A lecturer in natural philosophy, Jonathan Bankes by name, relinquished his professional appointment to establish the Albion seed crushing mill in Pembroke Gardens. An important firm engaged in the distilling of turpentine, and which may have had quite valuable interests in the tobacco trade, established a crushing mill at Otterspool: and, incidentally, another ancient industry becomes involved here, for the building had been designed originally for the manufacture of snuff.

Two young men decided to start in business for themselves about 1850, transferring their skill from colour-making to seed-crushing. An important firm of tar distillers added seed-crushing to their other activity, and then abandoned tar-distilling. Later on the owners of a brewery in Kent St., equipped with new machinery and plant, began to specialise in the milling of palm kernels and copra, then a new raw material to Merseyside. Two brothers, Richard and Joseph Wallace, whose family as well as they themselves had proved highly successful with an oil business, a flour mill, a brewery, a distillery, and a large grocery store in Ireland, equipped one large building in Rigby St. with seed crushing machinery; but little is known of the result, except that a few months later the building collapsed with fatal results to a number of the workpeople.

As one would expect, the seed crushers gradually moved riverwards to meet their raw material on its arrival, while the port developed facilities for discharging cargoes, and shipowners built and operated the necessary vessels. Simultaneously, in the city of Liverpool, there were provided all the most up-to-date facilities for insuring, banking, and distributing, so that as the 19th century ended, nuts, seeds,

and copra could be crushed almost at the point of arrival while, within a few hours if necessary, the oil and cake could be loaded and despatched by canal, rail, road or river to almost any point within the rapidly widening area of distribution.

Firms known the world over now engage in the modern technique of seed crushing, oil-producing, and oil-cake manufacture; others just as widely known devote their main activities to making compound-cake: others again combine all these activities in a completely integrated organisation that has proved more than capable of holding its own with competitors in any part of the world.

Amongst the original deputies when the Chamber first began operations on behalf of Liverpool merchants trading overseas, there appears the African Association, represented a few years later by no less a personage than Mr. Horsfall, the founder-president of the Chamber. In October, 1884, this association became the African section; and during the subsequent years this section pioneered most of Britain's activities in West Africa. The section achieved a wide and deep influence which it utilised with both wisdom and enterprise under chairmen of energy and exceptional breadth of vision, one of the most notable being Sir Alfred L. Jones, K.C.M.G., who later became one of the Chamber's most distinguished presidents.

The early days of the African Association and African section may be cited as a remarkable example of the flag following trade: or, to phrase it more emphatically, of Government policy being initiated and developed by commerce. As the years swept onwards, however, strained international relations introduced an entirely new factor in the trading prospects of British merchants: and although the trail-blazing traders had originally desired nothing more than freedom to consolidate their positions and proceed systematically up-country from their coast bases without interference of any kind—political, governmental, or international—there came a time when traders found it

necessary to accept, and in certain instances to welcome, assistance from the British Government in resisting "active aggression of rival powers," as Mr. Thomas Barker (secretary of the Chamber for many years) phrased it in a survey of the Chamber's history which he contributed to the *Magazine of Commerce circa*, 1906.

France had been rapidly advancing from her North African possessions toward the central Niger; and French troops and traders spread from the western shores—the Dakar area, for example—almost to the frontiers of Sierra Leone. Similar movements became evident east and west of Dahomey, all of which foreshadowed today's great French Empire in West Africa, totalling some 1,500,000 square miles. Germany also played a part in this great grab for African territory by seizing the Cameroons and landing on the shores of Togo, which latter in the parlance of a later generation of Germans, was taken into "protective custody" and the natives subjected to a form of forced labour infinitely worse than that from which Germany assumed they required protection.

Thus French and German traders began to enter territory hitherto regarded by British merchants as historically and commercially their own; and all protests against this unwelcome competition proved futile, the foreigners claiming that they had as much a right to share in the spoils of West Africa as any other country.

Memorials were addressed to the British Government, therefore, praying that the boundaries of certain British colonies be extended; to proclaim Protectorates so that large areas might be reserved for future trade development; to delimit some of the more recent claims made by other Powers; to press for uniform tariffs within agreed areas; to improve communications and to build water works; to assist in the collection and preparation of raw materials; and to introduce money measures and legislation to give effect to all those requests.

In due course the National African Company became the Royal Niger Company, with a charter for trade and

administrative purposes. Another concern, however, attempted to obtain similar concessions for the area now known as Southern Nigeria, probably with the intention of amalgamating with the Royal Niger Company and the British East India Company. This, however, ran contrary to the interests of West African traders as a whole; and so disputes, almost amounting to hostilities, arose which could only be ended by revoking the Royal Niger Company's charter.

The return to private enterprise and natural, normal competition led to swift developments throughout British West Africa in which members of the Chamber's African section played a vital part. Trade increased in all the areas under British jurisdiction, and merchants embarked on a new period of cooperation with the Government in opening new roads, introducing fresh industries, improving health conditions, and laying the foundation of that policy which has formed Britain's cornerstone in West Africa ever since, viz., government through native law and custom, or in the immortal phrase of Lord Lugard, K.C.M.G., C.B., Nigeria's famous Governor-and-Commander-in-Chief, one of the most enlightened men ever to occupy this high office, "Indirect rule—Britain's dual mandate."

Upon this foundation there has been built a section of the Chamber with a well-merited reputation for the exercise of wisdom and experience in short-term and long-term planning. The subjects mentioned earlier in this chapter present but a mere fraction of the ground covered in detail and with such scrupulous regards for the welfare and general prosperity of the Chamber as a whole. Since its inception the African section (changing its name later to the West African section) has displayed a fine regard for its responsibility to serve each and every member of its own section and of the Chamber with strict impartiality, whether dealing with transport facilities (or lack of them!) in Britain or in Africa, or with the loading and unloading conditions at the docks in Liverpool or in surf boats along the West African coast, with trading problems in exporting

to or importing from West Africa, with Government controls, taxation, Customs duties, cable and parcel post rates and labour conditions. In all these the section, under a series of remarkably able chairmen, has shown a statesmanship, and attained a standard of integrity, that will serve as examples for all time.

A third organisation of ancient origin, the West India Merchants' Association, has records extending as far as 1799, its primary object at that time being to assist in financing members' business by the issue of loans from the National Exchequer through the association. Records of transactions indicate considerable activity even in 1799, and although some kind of body may have existed previously yet it seems most likely that that year witnessed the association's inauguration. History gives no clear indication as to which merchant or merchants took a prominent part in forming the association, but no doubt the old established firm of Sandbach, Tinne & Company, ship-owners and merchants, whose business was founded in 1802, were amongst the most active members.

Such well known Liverpool names as John Gladstone, Thomas Fletcher, George Irlam, and Charles Lawrence appear on the committee which was formed to confer with the dock authorities on various matters connected with exports and shipping; this committee serves as a connecting link between the association and the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to the present day. The Mayor usually acted as chairman during daily meetings held at No. 15 Water St., and amongst those attending regularly one finds Liverpool merchants whose descendants serve the Chamber in one aspect or another to this day. A few years after 1799 it was decided to substitute meetings three times a week; and another resolution was passed to the effect that perishable provisions and dyewoods were not to be accepted; as one firm's beef was declared to be "in so precarious and damaged a state". At one time the Bank of England refused to receive money in repayment of loans made by

the commission until they were more regular; whereupon the secretary went up to London to deal with the difficulties and he very soon reached an amicable agreement.

A broken period exists from 1803 to 1807 when no minutes appear. But soon afterwards meetings were resumed at the West India Association's room in Parker St. under the chairmanship of Mr. Thomas Fletcher. There are copies of letters from the association to Members of Parliament canvassing their help in a number of matters affecting the trade of the port; in this connection Liverpool was fortunate then (as it is now) in having Parliamentary representatives with the interests and welfare of the city at heart. The association gave help in many widely different directions, sometimes in unexpected directions, one instance of this being an allocation of £100 to prosecute a man thought guilty of forging a seaman's will.

The association was and still is a well organised body recognised internationally and always available to deal, in so far as Lancashire is concerned, with matters connected with the British West Indies, British Guiana, and British Honduras; it is always ready and capable of dealing with public bodies, Government departments, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board and other organisations which it has to approach from time to time on behalf of its members. It has served many useful purposes during its long existence, particularly at a time when the Continental bounty-fed beet sugar threatened to extinguish the cane sugar estates in the West Indies. The efforts of the association largely contributed to the decision to abolish these unfair bounties; Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, it may be recollected, played an important part in this international controversy.

Whilst the functions of the association are mainly performed by the West India Committee in London, the Liverpool association continues to do much valuable work; and during the Second World War, under the chairmanship of Mr. T. H. Naylor and in cooperation with the Regional Port Director, it devised a scheme which greatly facilitated the diverting of large cargoes of rum to this

country. These arrangements were much appreciated by the Government, warehouse proprietors, shippers, and agents, as they made for smooth working and speedy handling during an exceptionally busy period. Finally, to show the association's continued cooperation in the Chamber's detailed objects, the association expressed approval of the formation in the early part of 1950 of a British West Indian section as part of the Chamber's framework.

As early as 1667 Sir Edward Moore refers to Liverpool's sugar trade with the West Indies and, describing a plot of land in Dale St., he says:

"Sugar House Close. This croft fronts the street for some 27 yards and I call it the Sugar House Close, because one Mr. Smith, a great sugar baker at London, a man, as report says, worth £40,000, came to London to treat with me. According to agreement he is to build all the front, 27 yards, a stately house of good hewn stone, four storeys high, and then to go through the same building with a large entry and then on the back side to erect a house for boiling and drawing sugar, otherwise called a sugar-baker's house. If this be once done, it will be a trade of at least £40,000 a year from the Barbadoes, which formerly the town never knew".

The Mr. Smith in question appears to have been in partnership with a man known as John Danvers; and his brother David came to Liverpool about 1670 to manage the sugar refinery in Dale St. This man became a prominent citizen and the proprietor of a large and successful business.

The year 1882 witnessed the formation of the first trade organisation of sugar refiners and sugar brokers of Liverpool, its immediate purpose in those days being to superintend the landing and weighing of raw sugar entering the port. The membership of this organisation—the Sugar Association of Lancashire Ltd.—now extends to all branches of the wholesale side of the sugar trade.

As might be expected from its long and close association

with Liverpool, the sugar industry has been represented continuously in the Chamber for half a century, first as the Sugar Refiners' Association, and then as the Sugar Association of Lancashire Ltd.

Member of the Chamber in 1900, Mr. Charles J. Crosfield, J.P., of Crosfield, Barrow & Company, sugar refiners, 323 Vauxhall Road, represented the Lancashire Sugar Refiners' Association from 1901 to 1906, being followed by other leading figures in the sugar refining trade, until a wider association—the present Sugar Association of Lancashire—brought in other branches, and today the Chamber includes amongst its members sugar merchants, sugar refiners, sugar brokers, sugar millers, sugar machinery manufacturers, and sugar planters.

As an important sugar refining and distributing centre, Liverpool supplies sugar to the North and Midlands of England, to Wales, and to Ireland, and parts of Scotland. At times the quantity of sugar supervised by the association during a single year has almost reached a total of 1,000,000 tons, or almost one third of the total amount of sugar imported into the United Kingdom during a normal year. Raw sugar of all categories passes through the Liverpool refineries, but the imports of Empire sugar show a steady increase as the result of the preference enjoyed by the British Colonies.

Among the original "deputies" listed at the Chamber's first annual general meeting there appears the Cotton Brokers' Association, an important trade organisation which, representing only one side of a vast industry of immense importance to Lancashire and the Port of Liverpool, was later to expand into a section fully representative of every side of the cotton trade.

The industrial revolution and the inventive qualities of the British people led directly to a wide expansion in the cotton spinning and allied industries. In retrospect it seems perfectly natural that the cotton trade should have established itself in Lancashire, with Liverpool as the most

suitable port for the import of raw materials and for exporting the finished goods. Nevertheless, certain other areas seem to have been anxious to stake a claim, but ultimately Lancashire's outstanding advantages, and the manner in which Mersey shipping facilities expanded to meet needs as they arose, resulted in the almost complete concentration upon Liverpool and Lancashire.

Lamentable although it may be, however, the immense significance of the cotton trade to this country is not recognised by the general public nor even by the average industrialist; while his Majesty's Government not only shows a complete indifference to the legitimate needs of the industry, but also restricts and frequently has defeated the best efforts of those who have unselfishly endeavoured to co-operate internationally during times of emergency. On the other hand, the importance of the Lancashire cotton industry and of Liverpool has always been fully recognised in America. In this connection a quotation from Dr. Norman Sydney Buck's *Anglo-American Trade 1800-1850* (Yale University Press) is particularly appropriate:

"One is accustomed to think of Liverpool as the great primary cotton market of the world, a market influencing profoundly all other markets for that commodity, reflecting the changes in any particular market, and passing them on to the other markets; in short, a focal point for the play of all the intricate forces of supply and demand in cotton the world over. It would not be far from the truth to say that this has been the case always, yet the statement cannot be made without qualification.

"In the first place, it is obvious that a century and more ago no market could so sensitively register the temporary ebbs and flows in the various other primary and secondary markets as does the market of Liverpool today. It is only with the increasing complexity and efficiency of organisation, and, above all, with the improvements in the means of transportation, and in the collection and dissemination of information, that we find

really a world market, with Liverpool as the central point.

“But aside from that Liverpool did not definitely establish her leadership in the importation of cotton until in the nineteenth century; London and Glasgow were of importance in the quarter of a century before 1880. Figures of the total importations of cotton into the United Kingdom and the importations into Liverpool for about the first ten years of the nineteenth century show the increasing importance of Liverpool as a port of entry for cotton.”

Interesting although early developments in the cotton trade may have been, however, this chapter must necessarily deal with Liverpool and the Chamber's ultimate assistance in forming the Cotton Trade section.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century there existed a well established and indeed flourishing cotton trade in Lancashire; and even before 1830 there seems to have existed a demand for some kind of organisation through which importers or merchants, buying and selling brokers, dealers and spinners, could exchange information and conduct their own trade affairs. The importers, and buying and selling brokers, grouped themselves naturally enough round the Port of Liverpool, while the dealers tended to centre all activities in Manchester where they maintained direct contact with the spinners. As output from the mills increased to correspond with greater demands from overseas consumers, so the spinners began to buy in Liverpool, thus short-circuiting the dealers in Manchester and adding to the number of buying brokers in Liverpool. This in turn encouraged the Manchester merchants to open branches in Liverpool. Ultimately the Liverpool market consisted of two main sections, namely selling brokers and buying brokers.

Not until 1832, however, did the trade form any central body, and even then the body which was formed extended its activities no further than a weekly meeting of brokers and the issue of certain details relative to the previous week's transactions. Ten years later, despite considerable

opposition, based on the assumption that any alteration would involve the industry in new responsibilities which certain individuals had no desire to accept, the leading firms officially inaugurated the Cotton Brokers' Association. Initially, the association's main activity comprised the issue of whatever information its members required, and for some years an unwritten code of honour regulated the transactions of the association and all association brokers. This unwritten code based on honesty and fair play has been appropriately recorded by Mr. T. Ellison in *The Cotton Trade of Great Britain* in which he says *inter alia*:

"The result of this good feeling and confidence was a condition of things without a parallel in any other department of trade. There was universal trustfulness; all transactions were plain, honest and above-board, and no broker was afraid of being tripped up by any of his fellow-brokers. There was no secrecy; every broker who cared to know, could know what his fellow-brokers were doing. There was a certain amount of honourable rivalry; but no jealousy, and no heartburning. Above all, there was no wrangling between merchants and brokers on the one hand, nor between spinners and brokers on the other."

As more rapid communication with the United States followed the laying of the transatlantic cable, there developed a system of buying and selling futures. Certain members of the Brokers' Association commenced doing business direct with shippers in America, thus dispensing with the services of a merchant; this resulted in brokers of this class becoming importers and competing directly with merchants. Those developments led to the establishment of a clearing house, through which all futures contracts had to be settled. The right of using the clearing house was denied to anyone not a member of the Cotton Brokers' Association, and consequently the merchants found themselves handicapped by having to pay brokerage for the privilege of having their futures business carried through for them.

Considerable friction between the merchants and brokers began to be evident and ultimately the merchants formed a new association called the Liverpool Cotton Exchange and announced that they would only do business with those brokers who retired from the Brokers' Association and became members of the newly constituted Liverpool Cotton Exchange. Finally all differences were settled and cordial relationships resumed between the firms on the original healthy basis. This led directly to the formation of a new association called the Liverpool Cotton Association amalgamating both bodies and since then this association has been one of the most influential trade organisations in the country.

While there is much accurate information about the earlier history of the cotton trade and its original development in Lancashire, the period from 1832 to 1882 is by no means well documented. A careful study of existing records, however, would indicate that during the crucial period 1852 to 1882 the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce not only fostered the admirable spirit "of honesty and fair play" but played a considerable part in bringing about the ultimate amalgamation between the Cotton Brokers' Association and the Liverpool Cotton Exchange, and later on between the Cotton Exchange and the brokers who ultimately formed the Liverpool Cotton Association. From the very beginning there existed as a deputy to the Chamber of Commerce a representative of the Cotton Brokers' Association, and at one time both the Cotton Brokers' Association and a Cotton Trade section (as an integral part of the Chamber's structure) were functioning. The section's purpose ceased to be of major importance once the Liverpool Cotton Association had been formed but, as the first organised body in which brokers and merchants could meet, the section laid the final paving stone on the road that led to the association coming into existence.

Today, while the intricacies of the cotton market do not directly concern the Chamber, yet cotton, Liverpool and Lancashire have become so closely linked that the existence

of a free cotton market must be regarded as imperative for the national prosperity, and thus the Chamber and council support to their utmost all efforts to secure the restoration of a completely free cotton market as integral with efficient operation of the cotton industry.

One January day in 1802 a number of citizens met in one of Liverpool's famous coffee rooms—probably that which flourished for so many years in Exchange Buildings. With nineteenth-century ceremony and solemnity, these men, representing merchants, shipowners and underwriters, elected as chairman Mr. John Gladstone, whose son was to bring renown to his birthplace of Liverpool and become one of the nineteenth century's most enlightened statesmen. This meeting resolved to form the Liverpool Underwriters' Association, a body of this kind being long overdue as Liverpool had been an important marine insurance market for many years previously. At one time, indeed, a writer described Liverpool as the port where "insurance is transacted on as fair a footing as any part of the world."

A fascinating study of these early days, particularly from 1802 to 1850, has been prepared by the present secretary of the association, Mr. R. A. Lloyd, and his treatise when it appears will not only enrich existing literature about historic Liverpool, but will fill a gap in the history of British insurance and British shipping. At present, however, it may suffice to refer to the tendency in those early days to cut rates below an economic level, and the association's successful efforts to resist this tendency which, in turn, resulted in perhaps the earliest rating committee. In this connection Mr. Lloyd quotes the wording of an agreement signed 30th June, 1810 :—

"The underwriters of Liverpool, having taken into their most serious consideration the present irregular and alarming state of their trade, owing chiefly to the inadequate rates of the premiums of insurance, and being sensible that the establishment of some system, which may have for its object the mutual safety and protection

of the interests of the assured, and the underwriter, has become necessary, by an equitable arrangement of such fair rates, as shall be universally acknowledged. HAVE RESOLVED :—

“ First—That a committee of seven underwriters be appointed by ballot, quarterly, to determine the fair rate of premiums at which insurance shall be effected, subject to such general or occasional alterations as said committee may think necessary, from the variation of political or other circumstances.

“ Second—That any broker, on application, shall be furnished with a copy of such rates as often as they shall be fixed or altered, for the information of merchants, and underwriters in their offices respectively; and the name of either of the members of the committee upon any policy of insurance to be considered as a sanction for the fairness of the premium for the risk underwritten.

“ Third—That we the underwriters whose names are hereunto subscribed, will not write, or allow to be written for us any policy or policies, at any office, or for any house or person whatever, at a lower rate, than the premiums fixed as fair and reasonable, in manner aforesaid, by the committee.

“ Fourth—That these regulations commence on 30th July, 1810, and continue until the first day of January, 1811, when a general meeting of the underwriters shall be called for the purpose of renewing or amending the same, for the following year, in such mode as may then seem eligible.”

This agreement concludes with a long list of rates calculated “ upon the first rate ships ” such as:—Liverpool to Jamaica and back, £10 10 /-; Jamaica to Liverpool, 1st July convoy, £5 5 /-; Jamaica to Liverpool, single ships after 1st August, £8 8 /-.

In those early days no Liverpool marine insurance companies existed. Indeed, after the first quarter of the century the London Assurance and the Royal Exchange Assurance enjoyed a monopoly in this country, in so far as

companies were concerned, no other company being authorised to engage in the business of marine insurance. Those who participated in underwriting consisted of ship-owners, merchants, and even shipbuilders who, being fully engaged in their orthodox activities, relegated all underwriting business to a broker or brokers. These underwriters and their brokers had representatives on the committee of the Underwriters' Association from time to time and this explains how to this very day the Underwriters' Association has associations with and is supported by many brokers. Subscribers include almost every well-known Liverpool shipowner and many merchants; and like many other activities so closely associated with nineteenth century Liverpool the list of directors today includes descendants of the founders.

The advent of iron ships and steam propulsion brought in their wake a new company altogether—the very first marine insurance company in Liverpool, known as the Thames and Mersey.

In Liverpool shipping circles, however, it appeared very clear that during the transitional period from wood to iron many difficulties would arise, leading almost certainly to disputes and very possibly to unnecessary and costly litigation. Shipowners and ship-operators felt that Lloyd's Register did not adequately allow for this change nor recognise the risks involved; therefore the Liverpool Underwriters' Association undertook the survey of iron ships in 1856 and less than two years afterwards founded the historic Liverpool Iron Register, formed of three members elected by the Underwriters' Association and three by the Liverpool Shipowners' Association along with the chairmen of the organisations most directly concerned, namely the Liverpool Underwriters' Association, the Liverpool Shipowners' Association and the Steamship Owners' Association, as *ex officio* members. The Liverpool Iron Register proved highly satisfactory, and its publication, *The Liverpool Underwriters' Registry of Iron Vessels*, appearing originally in 1862, continued for twenty-three years, after which the un-

desirability of two organisations producing classification books ended with amalgamation and the larger representation of the Liverpool Underwriters' Association on the committee of Lloyd's Register.

In 1865 the Liverpool Underwriters' Association became affiliated to the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, its deputy being Mr. W. H. Jones of Jones, Palmer & Company, shipowners and insurance brokers. Mr. Jones's name appears personally as a member in 1864.

Some twenty years later with the permeation of Liverpool's advanced ideas in a southward direction there came a proposal that an institute of underwriters should be formed to include all similar organisations in the United Kingdom, and in 1884 the Institute of London Underwriters was established. This institute has worked in close co-operation with the Liverpool Underwriters' Association all down the years; and, as might be expected, with London taking a greater share in the import and export business, as well as constituting the world's financial centre, the London Institute has taken over most of the tasks connected with the technical side of marine insurance. The Liverpool Underwriters' Association is represented on all the important institute committees dealing with cargo and hull insurances; the Liverpool head office are members of the institute through their London office, whilst all the branches and agencies of London companies operating in Liverpool are members correspondingly of the association.

The gales of 1893 wrought severe havoc amongst shipping, and between the 20th and 23rd of November the underwriters had reports of almost 300 casualties, the most disastrous winter in the whole experience of underwriters to that date.

The Liverpool Underwriters' Association celebrated its centenary in 1902 with a banquet, attended by the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Derby, and eminent judges, politicians, shipowners, merchants and underwriters of that time. Shortly afterwards a number of amalgamations added considerably to the strength of the market and at the

present time the committee of the Liverpool Underwriters' Association has representatives from nine of the leading marine insurance companies operating in Liverpool.

Looking at the association today one sees how it has long rendered fine service to the port, stoutly supporting all movements connected with the development of every aspect of shipping. It has used its influence successfully and continuously in the improvement of harbours, light-houses and aids to navigation at home and abroad. It realises that the continuing strength of the market lies in training its younger members and as far back as 1908 a legacy was left by Mr. Arthur McNeill (at one time secretary of the British & Foreign Marine Insurance Company), to encourage marine insurance clerks to study the subjects with which they would have to deal in later years. Later on, in 1919, Mr. H. T. Wallace (at one time underwriter of the Sea Insurance Company) presented a sum for the provision of similar prizes for senior employees.

Each morning underwriters, brokers, shipowners and merchants meet in the "Room"—the hub of the marine market in Liverpool; this apartment is equipped with a tape machine and all the latest publications from the shipping and daily Press and other forms of shipping intelligence exclusive to underwriters. It contains a chair constructed from the wreckage of H.M.S. *Lutine*, a frigate in the Royal Navy from 1793 to 1799, when she was wrecked near Terschelling with a cargo of gold and silver bars and coins on board. Two of the coins which were salvaged have been fitted into the back of the chair as an integral part of the decorative design. This chair is occupied by the chairman of the association on official occasions. On the walls hang pictures of early nineteenth century ships which contrast strangely with the teleprinter connected directly with the intelligence department at Lloyd's, and alongside is a framed bill of lading dated February 1805, containing full details of a consignment of 115 male and 64 female slaves to the West Indies.

At the association's lookout hut on the Liverpool Landing Stage is found the most modern equipment, including radar and the most recent types of wireless and telephonic apparatus. Yet even so, the keen observer may notice a telescope always available, should scientific means fail, a unique safety measure which has proved its worth from time to time. Observations from the lookout hut are transmitted immediately to the members interested in the ships whose movements are thus recorded, and so early information is passed immediately to the head office when ships are sighted as they approach the port from distant parts of the world.

The year 1877 saw the bringing together of another group of firms previously without a trade organisation, namely the timber trade which became affiliated to the Liverpool Chamber as the Timber Trade Association in the year just mentioned, with Mr. James Harrison, of Harrison, Robinson & Company, timber merchants, No. 7 Canada Dock, as deputy. Mr. Harrison himself became a member of the council in 1878.

After a long period of membership and adding at times to the debates and contributing considerably to the development of the port and its facilities for handling large consignments of timber, the Timber Trade Association became increasingly concerned in 1917 about the disastrous effects of Government action in attempting to control the timber trade. Thirteen enterprising firms petitioned the Chamber to form a trade section, and this resulted in the formation of a Timber Trade section a month later when there were elected a Mr. A. Dobell as chairman, Mr. George Lamb as vice-chairman, and five members. At their inaugural meeting the members expressed

“ their concern at the difficulties they were suffering due to the Government control of their trade, and trade buying; and they wished such Government interference to be abolished at the earliest possible moment. In the meantime there should be a gradual relaxation of control

and a gradual reduction in price from the present 'artificial basis'."

It was estimated that the administration expenses of the various departments of the Timber Control cost some £324,000 per annum. The timber trade strongly objected to the system compelling them to disclose confidential information to the Timber Supplies Department, this department being staffed to a considerable extent by employees of their competitors who were thus able to obtain access to information otherwise completely beyond their reach.

With the intention of strengthening the membership of the section the members resolved to accept as members only those firms engaged in the timber trade which were already members of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce; and all at the meeting intimated their desire to become members of the Timber Trade section. One result of this highly laudable resolution was a rapid increase in the number of members which by 1919 reached a record total of 61. The Timber Trade section gave much attention to the railway delays caused by wagon shortage and as a result the difficulties disappeared altogether. Another highly gratifying result of the section's activities was the total abolition of the control of hardwoods and softwoods in 1919. Steps taken to eliminate the control of imports by the Import Restriction Department, and also the necessity for obtaining licences, proved equally successful.

The section then turned its attention to the co-ordination of the traffic of the port, and as an indication of the thoroughness with which this important matter was treated, the following points were debated in great detail during a meeting of the section held in July 1919.

1. The manner in which the master porter dealt with goods when discharged, and the absolute inadequacy of the quay accommodation;
2. The desirability of supplying mechanical appliances for handling timber of every description;
3. The desirability of extending the system of dock haulage and placing of railway metals alongside

and in all sheds so that goods could be loaded-up and forwarded ex quay; 4. The elimination of all horse-drawn traffic and increase of motor traction; 5. The lack of warehouse accommodation and open storage; 6. The extension of overside delivery system.

As a result of the re-organisation of the Timber Trade Association in 1924 the work of the Timber Trade section of the Chamber gradually became of less technical importance. The association, however, is still affiliated to the Chamber and represented on the council.

The Salt Chamber of Commerce originated at Northwich, Cheshire, in 1858, when a large meeting of the most important people in the salt industry elected Mr. William Worthington as chairman, and Mr. William Clay, of Droitwich, as vice-chairman, and a council to act on behalf of the salt industry which in those days was rapidly growing in importance and quickly becoming able to contribute to Britain's export trade.

At the Liverpool Chamber's half-yearly general meeting on 29th August, 1859, a resolution was passed inviting the Salt Chamber of Commerce to send a deputy to the Council of the Liverpool Chamber; at the next half-yearly meeting there appeared amongst the deputies the name of Mr. J. R. Darsie, who continued to represent the salt industry for some years.

Prior to this, however, the Liverpool Chamber had shown considerable anxiety about the export of salt, and about the time of the Salt Chamber's formation—or quite possibly before—the council of the Liverpool Chamber addressed a memorial to the Earl of Malmesbury about the prohibition of the importation of British salt into China. His Lordship replied to the effect that the attention of the British plenipotentiary would be given to the subject. The Chamber also expressed grave concern about what it described as “the very important subject of the regulations affecting the importation of British salt into India”. A special committee was appointed to re-

port on whether any, and what, amendments might be suggested.

In Calvert's *Salt in Cheshire* there occurs a reference to representations made by the Salt Chamber of Commerce which resulted in an Inspector of Mines (Mr. Joseph Dickinson) being commissioned by the Secretary of State for Home Affairs to investigate the subsidences which had occurred and were, in 1871, still causing grave concern in the salt districts of Cheshire. His report, presented to the Commons in May 1873, was largely responsible for subsequent attempts to obtain legislative redress for damage to property and lands.

The main activities of the Salt Chamber since its inauguration appear to have been the collation and circulation of statistics of sales of salt at home and abroad. It is understood that the Salt Chamber ceased to function some fifteen years ago, and that for a long period prior to that, the late Mr. H. John Falk, a director of the now defunct Salt Union Ltd., was the sole sponsor in the Chamber. Mr. Falk's name ceased to appear in 1941 among representatives of affiliated associations. In 1942, no doubt as the result of war conditions, and the unsettled state of home industries, as well as the amalgamations which went to complete the group of chemical interests now known as Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd., which interests were already fully represented by other bodies and firms in the Liverpool Chamber, an individual representative of the salt industry became unnecessary and so the Salt Chamber disappeared completely from the list of affiliated associations.

By virtue of its geographical situation and admirable dock organisation, the Port of Liverpool has developed into Britain's most valuable fruit-importing centre.

Originating early in the 1880's when fast clippers brought supplies of St. Michael's oranges from the Azores, Liverpool's volume of fruit imports increased with the arrival of oranges from Portugal and Spain, and of lemons

from Italy. Later came apples from Canada and the east coast of North America; later again, the opening of the Panama Canal led to a still greater volume of fruit imports from the Pacific Coast. During the twentieth century the tendency has been for Liverpool merchants to obtain fruit from wider areas altogether. No importer of the 1890's could possibly have foreseen the immense growth in the import of oranges from California, South Africa and Brazil and (most unexpectedly perhaps) Palestine; the vast quantities of apples imported from Australasia as well as the Pacific Coast would also have given rise to no little astonishment. The enterprise of merchants found scope in introducing the grapefruit, a variety little known in England until after the First World War; as the result of this enterprise the grapefruit has become a staple article in the trade, and reaches Liverpool from many different countries.

Speedy distribution in dealing with perishable produce, such as fruit, is the essence of success; otherwise the consumer fails to reap the benefit of all the technique which goes to the growing, transport, shipment, importing and distribution of an essential item in the nation's food supply. The Port of Liverpool being adequately equipped with all dock and transport facilities and connected by road and rail transport to all parts of the North and Midlands, it is no uncommon thing for cases of fruit arriving by sea early in the morning to be discharged, sampled, sold, transported to inland markets in Yorkshire and Lancashire, and to be sold to the public by retail shopkeepers the same afternoon.

The fruit importing industry has enjoyed association with the Chamber for a number of years, the trade organisation which originally obtained affiliation on 28th June, 1904—the Liverpool and District Fruit Buyers' Association—sending a representative, in the person of Mr. T. J. France, to this day. Another section of the trade is also affiliated, namely the Fruit Importers' Association (Liverpool), which has its representative in Mr. W. M. Mirrlees. Yet another affiliated body, the Liverpool Fruit Brokers' Association, originated in 1877, is represented

today by Mr. A. Peacock. Originally this association comprised four firms which combined for the purpose of acquiring a site in Victoria St., bounded by Stanley St. and Temple Court, on which it was proposed to erect a new auction sale room. Two years later a fifth firm joined the original four and the lineal descendants of all five firms are still members of the association. More than one of those pioneers can point with pride to their origin at the very beginning of Liverpool's fruit importing trade.

The association obtained incorporation as a limited liability company in 1905, the first secretary being Mr. O. I. Van Wart who continued to serve with exceptional efficiency until his retirement in 1932.

The present Fruit Exchange, officially opened on 14th January, 1924, in Victoria St., continued the original exchange carried on for so many years at the sale room in Temple Court. The Victoria St. building includes every necessary up-to-date equipment for its purpose and copes efficiently with the heavy arrivals of fruit at the peak of the season. The display of goods offered for sale is arranged in a most practical fashion, samples being exhibited on lifts, when necessary, these lifts bringing samples up from the cellars to a position beneath the rostrum and almost beneath the auctioneer's hammer; thus they are in the full view of every buyer present in the exchange. The exchange provides adequate communication facilities, including telegraph and cable and wireless offices. The Liverpool Fruit Exchange enjoys the reputation of having concentrated in its sale rooms the keenest competition and the most efficient buying power of any fruit exchange this side of the Atlantic.

Sales by auction, suspended during the Second World War when all importation of fruit became the responsibility of the Ministry of Food, were replaced by a system of allocation to buyers with the object of ensuring an even distribution of the limited supplies available under Government control: but resumption of more normal trading in November, 1949, brought the auctioneer's hammer into

COUNCIL, 1851.

- ✓ THOMAS BERRY HORSFALL, ESQ., PRESIDENT,
- ✓ HUGH HORNBY, ESQ., VICE-PRESIDENT,
- ✓ THE MAYOR OF LIVERPOOL, (*ex-officio.*)

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| ✓ JOHN AIKIN, ESQ. | ✓ R. A. MACFIE, ESQ. x |
| ✓ T. R. ARNOTT, ESQ. | ✓ JOS. MALCOMSON, ESQ. |
| ✓ THOMAS BOUCH, ESQ. | ✓ WM. POTTER, ESQ. |
| ✓ FRANCIS BOULT, ESQ. | ✓ ROBERT RANKIN, ESQ. |
| ✓ JOHN CLOW, ESQ. | ✓ CHAS. ROBERTSON, ESQ. |
| ✓ J. CROSFIELD, JUN., ESQ. | ✓ JAMES RYDER, ESQ. |
| ✓ T. B. FORWOOD, ESQ. | ✓ JAMES RYLEY, ESQ. |
| ✓ EDWARD HEATH, ESQ. | ✓ RICHARD SHEIL, ESQ. |
| ✓ CHAS. HOLLAND, ESQ. | ✓ JAMES STITT, ESQ. |
| ✓ WILLIAM LAIRD, ESQ. | ✓ W. J. TOMLINSON, ESQ. |
| ✓ H. LITTEDALE, ESQ. | |

DEPUTIES.

- AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE *Wm. Hall b.m. p. 184.*
- ✓ AFRICAN ASSOCIATION JAS. A. TOBIN, ESQ.
- ✓ GENERAL BROKERS' ASSOCIATION ~~W. B. COMPTON, ESQ.~~ *J. B. Compt.*
- ✓ WINE AND SPIRIT ASSOCIATION R. W. PRESTON, ESQ.
- ✓ SHIPOWNERS' ASSOCIATION ~~JOHN LOCKETT, ESQ.~~ *J. P. Lockett*
- ✓ WAREHOUSE KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION, THOS. DOVER, ESQ.
- ✓ WEST INDIA ASSOCIATION FRANCIS SHAND, ESQ.

ROBERT TRONSON, Secretary.

(Right)
The Rt. Hon.
The Earl of Derby,
M.C., D.L.,
president



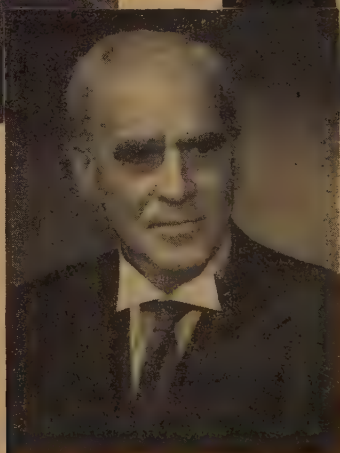
(Below)
Mr. Bertram Nelson,
J.P., F.S.A.A.,
vice-chairman



(Above)
Mr. E. A. G. Caröc,
chairman



(Left)
Mr. R. C. de Zouche
F.C.A.,
hon. treasurer



Officers of the Chamber, March, 1950

effect once more. Buyers from London, Birmingham, and many North of England centres occupied the exchange's tiers of benches for the first sale of de-controlled fruit. One of the auctioneers wielded his hammer with such enthusiasm that the head parted company from the shaft, whereupon one well-known importer remarked that he hoped the average fruit-buyer, over-joyed by a return to private trading, would keep his head—unlike the hammer—and not bid too high for the first de-controlled consignments.

One auctioneer, in an interview after the sale on 23rd November, 1949, stated: "This is the quickest and fairest way of selling fruit." After some nine years of controlled fruit imports, few people knowing the fruit trade are likely to disagree with that statement.

On its original formation, in 1891, the Tobacco Trade section represented almost every concern in Liverpool engaged at that time in the manufacturing and wholesaling of tobacco; and in addition to the Liverpool firms, there were included representatives of the trade in Bristol, Nottingham and Preston. This union of so many interests in Liverpool and, indeed, in all the main tobacco manufacturing centres throughout Britain, inspired Mr. Thomas H. Barker, secretary of the Chamber, to write: "As separate firms and individuals, the strongest had been found comparatively weak, but in association the old adage *l'union fait la force* was exemplified."

As an instance of how this union added strength to the trade and so enabled the association to accomplish in a few short years what might have taken ten times longer otherwise, one may cite the warehousing of tobacco at the King's, Albert and Stanley Docks, three entirely separate warehouses. This became a time and money wasting state of affairs which caused much inconvenience at a period when tobacco stocks in Liverpool totalled more than those anywhere else in Britain: moreover, those large stocks were continually increasing. After several deputations to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board requesting the erection

of a new warehouse capable of accommodating those large stocks, the section was successful in having erected, in 1901, a new tobacco warehouse with 13 floors and basement, a total floor area of 36 acres, with accommodation for an additional 60,000 hogsheads, the building itself being 725 ft. in length, 165 ft. in breadth, 125 ft. in height, and costing £300,000—a large sum in 1901.

Although most necessary at the time and constituting an immense help towards consolidating the tobacco trade in Liverpool as a port, the full advantage of those early achievements by the section was not apparent until much later when successive Chancellors of the Exchequer made frequent alterations in the duty payable on tobacco imports. At such times a strong, well-organised body, speaking with one voice for the whole trade, kept a watchful eye on all Budget proposals and proved able more than once to offer constructive criticisms which not only simplified the proposed changes but adequately protected the interests of the trade and the Port of Liverpool. Today, the same principles are carried into active effect by the section and by the secretarial service that the Chamber gives to the Northern Tobacco Manufacturers' Association.

The Chamber's first annual meeting as an incorporated body (the 25th annual general meeting) continued business carried over from the previous annual meeting, and the report dealt with matters as widely varied as trade with Western China and traffic on the Liverpool-Leeds Canal, speculation on the stock exchange, and the master-porterage system, contracts for carrying H.M. mails to China and Japan, and the Mersey Channel Bill, the blockade of Hong Kong by Chinese Customs cruisers, and inadequate means of distinguishing fire in the docks, a new French treaty, and the condition of the British Mercantile Marine.

In moving the adoption of this report the president, Mr. Lawrence R. Baily, J.P., probably because of the wide variety of subjects covered and their ramifications over a

considerable portion of the globe's surface, stated, "possession of this chair does not confer upon its holder the virtue of omniscience." Yet his speech showed a masterly grasp of the intricacies of negotiations which occupied so much of the time and energies of the council and committees during that year and the next few years. It was a period fraught with immense significance for Liverpool and the whole world.

With Disraeli as Prime Minister, stoutly supported by a party thoroughly convinced as to the soundness of his new programme—Imperialism, popularising the Crown, and Tory democracy—there commenced an era of "consolidation translated into terms of Empire" as Lieut.-Col. P. G. R. Burford, T.D., M.A., the present secretary of the Chamber, has so aptly phrased it.

Free trade, as a universal doctrine, had to surrender to a series of tariff treaties in which Great Britain continued to hold open its own markets but endeavoured to obtain most-favoured-nation treatment in return. To hold one's own in those circumstances may be regarded as satisfactory, but certainly as no more than that. In actual practice, however, interminable disputes occurred in the operation (if, indeed, not in the interpretation), of those treaties. And this had all been foreseen by Disraeli, as his campaign of 1874 indicated quite clearly. He aimed at nothing less than a British Empire which would develop into a mighty and self-sufficient unit, as strong economically as it was to be financially; yet his appeal was to patriotism rather than to economics. He spread the gospel that British products and the British way of life were basically and substantially superior to those of any other nation in the world. He exhorted the commercial community to implement that gospel: and he pleaded for a national spirit, and for a physical structure in terms of trade and commerce, to correspond with that gospel.

In fact, it might be stated that from a small and rather venturesome boy, not quite sure of his newly-found strength, and of an armoury of weapons in the use of which he had

not been trained adequately, Great Britain had attained the full confidence and glory of manhood. Having now come of full age, Britain claimed the key of independence with which to open the markets of any country with which trade could be conducted on a profitable basis.

In this swift growth, of course, Liverpool had its own individual part to play, for Liverpool too had grown up. Not only can one point to the first bishop's enthronement in 1880, the advancement of Liverpool from a town to a city in that same year, and the elevation of Liverpool's chief citizen to the dignity of Lord Mayor in 1893, but there appear evidences, perhaps less spectacular but infinitely more convincing, in steady growth of trade with other countries and with its most essential accompaniment in improved docks, harbours, communications, and general commerce, as well as in banking, insurance and shipping.

Work completed by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board included twenty-nine items of important new construction or improvements of major importance, the series concluding in 1900 with the draining and clearance of the land on which now stands the board's own offices, along with the Cunard and Royal Liver Buildings. Following this fine piece of land reclamation, the Chamber urged and, in due course, obtained the appointment of a full-time general manager for the rapidly-developing dock estate. Pressure by the Chamber was directed on many occasions to the necessity for lower dues and charges. Then the opening of the Manchester Ship Canal focussed attention on the fact, repeatedly stressed by the Chamber's president in 1887 (when the Canal Bill finally received the Royal Assent), that Liverpool occupied a site remote from the inland areas which it tried to serve, one result being that other ports which maintained closer contacts with those areas were gaining ground to the detriment of the Port of Liverpool.

Export figures quoted at the time indicated that while a few years previously the value of Liverpool's exports had exceeded that of London and ten other United Kingdom

ports put together, in 1886 it merely equalled the total of London plus the two next highest—a state of affairs not at all satisfactory to members of the Chamber. Surely things had indeed come to a low ebb if Liverpool could do no better than equal London and a few other ports!

In communications, a vast amount of really arduous, painstaking, and at times unsuccessful work had been cheerfully shouldered by the Chamber, which presented the most convincing evidence as to the necessity of improvements in postal and telegraphic services, in stamping facilities, and in establishing telephone communications. The consideration given to points which seem almost insignificant today—they seem so, because the Chamber's foresight in those early days resulted in services which the commercial community accepts without a thought in 1950—indicates that each suggestion received the most thorough discussion in every detail, from the site of the head post office to an improved mail service to the Far East.

As an instance of the need for improvement, a telegraphic agent, Mr. John Jones, informed the Chamber on one occasion that market reports from Liverpool to Havre and Bremen were telegraphed twice a day to those ports via New York, and in that way reached the Continent two hours earlier than via London! The Chamber petitioned for a reduction in the rate for inland telegrams to sixpence for twelve words, and for West India mails to be embarked and disembarked at Plymouth, thereby giving an additional twenty-four hours longer for the posting of letters in Liverpool and correspondingly accelerating delivery times of mails on arrival in the United Kingdom.

The Chamber requested adequate representation of the commercial community at the International Telegraph Conference at Berlin in 1885, and it appointed a special committee to consider and report upon the telegraphic service and postal reforms in 1888. A year later the council reported on the "telegraph convention" code: after the Berlin Conference had declined to prepare a dictionary of code words (rules for the compilation of which

had previously been effected by a staff of the world's most experienced telegraphists) the Chamber exhibited at its offices a complete copy of the code, in eight parts, for examination by members and other interested parties. Prepared by private enterprise where the Postmaster-General had failed to satisfy telegraph and cable users, this code included 128,000 words each of which differed in at least two letters from every other word. The idea of a co-operative telephone association, to provide a complete telephone service to all business houses in Liverpool, to commence on 1st January, 1891 (three weeks after the expiration of the Bell patent) was debated in February, 1890, but ultimately the Chamber decided to leave the matter in the hands of the Postmaster-General.

A long series of negotiations reached a successful conclusion when Sir Edward Birkbeck, as chairman of the National Lifeboat Institution, announced that the Chamber's memorial on this subject, as presented to the Prime Minister, had been largely instrumental in having his (Sir Edward's) motion supported in the House of Commons "by all sides and parties . . . and the Government accepted it without a murmur. The sum of £20,000 was at once obtained to begin the work, and this has been spent already in placing the most important parts of the coast in telephonic or telegraphic communication, with the result that life has already been saved by our lifeboats thus called out." Thus the saving of human life becomes merely another activity which the Chamber takes in its stride.

Banks and banking had made steady but not spectacular progress without any major triumphs or disasters since Mr. W. E. Gladstone called at Brunswick St. to have luncheon with the partners of Heywood's Bank. His arrival attracted big crowds which grew larger as the distinguished guest and his hosts lingered over their meal. To many people, of course, crowds outside a bank have but one meaning—a *run on the bank*. So the rumour spread, and

still more people joined the crowds, until ultimately the G.O.M. himself had to speak from a balcony on the first floor, personally vouching for the solvency of his hosts and their bank.

In those days quite a number of illiterate people had banking accounts, and to aid in identification it became the practice for a description of the customer to be entered in the space usually reserved for the customer's signature in the bank's signature book. As might be expected, those descriptions had to be accurate—and seldom flattering: for instance, typical entries were:—"Short man. Whiskers all round his face. One tooth out in front.": "Old man, red wig, wedding ring on right hand": "Rather short, and remarkably plain. Like a monkey."

Nor did women customers fare any better: here are two entries from a Liverpool Bank's signature book:—"Thick-lipped old woman of 45". "Little woman, in-mouthed . . . lost her teeth!"

Being seriously concerned about lack of railways in West Africa and the need for additional railway communications, particularly in Nigeria and the Gold Coast, the African Trade section sent a second deputation in 1895 to the newly-appointed Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, repeating the views expressed to his predecessor. A direct result was the construction of the first railway connecting Lagos with the mainland. An interesting sidelight on the painstaking care displayed in those days by Cabinet Ministers, who apparently thoroughly mastered the most intricate details of departmental activity, was Mr. Chamberlain's statement that he would not consider any scheme "which did not provide for the accommodation of the traffic of both Abeocuta and Ibadan." It would be highly interesting to know how many of Mr. Chamberlain's successors ever heard of those two important centres in Nigeria: how many, that is, apart from the Right Hon. Oliver Stanley, P.C., M.P., one of the few (and perhaps the only) Colonial Secretary

who personally visited every British Colony during his period of office and thus obtained first-hand information about the needs and possibilities of each.

Improved communications in an entirely different sphere followed the Chamber's request that arrangements should be made whereby cables could be sent by telegram through ordinary post office channels. Negotiations between the three cable companies on the one hand, and the National Telephone Company and the Post Office on the other, having been completed in 1897, the desired acceleration in cable communications became available to the commercial community.

Distinguished visitors accepted invitations to address the Chamber in 1897 and 1898, amongst them being the Duke of Devonshire and the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, P.C., M.P.; the Chamber entertained Colonial Premiers at a banquet, those present including the High Commissioner for Canada, the Premier of Victoria, the Premier of New Zealand, the Premier of Queensland, the Premier of Tasmania and the Premier of South Australia.

A steady increase in the Chamber's income from 1894 to 1898 caused the treasurer to explain with justifiable jubilation that this was due to the following reasons:— To the wider usefulness of the Chamber, and to the recognition of that fact by the mercantile community in general; to the additional efforts made to popularise the institution by suitable addresses, and the entertainment of important Government officials; and to the results of other activities details of which need not be given to readers of these pages.

CHAPTER FOUR

Other important developments in 19th Century Liverpool—The Daily Press, Shipping, Shiprepairing, Stock Exchange, Gas Manufacture, Cross-river Communication, School of Tropical Medicine.

EARLY IN 1807, there appeared a prospectus informing the citizens of Liverpool that "in times like the present, when Europe is continually presenting great and alarming potential revolutions, and a bold and successful usurper, infatuated with ambition to universal domination, extends the rod of his tyranny over prostrate nations" there existed an overwhelming case for a Liverpool newspaper: and on 6th January, 1808, Liverpool's first newspaper, the *Liverpool Courier and Commercial* made its debut as a four-page "High Tory" weekly. The Whigs naturally enough followed with another publication devoted to the cause of Reform, bearing the somewhat comprehensive title *Liverpool Mercury or Commercial, Literary and Political Herald*. This appeared on 5th July 1811, at sevenpence per copy, one half of this price being absorbed by stamp duty. Regarded, and rightly too, as an "iniquitous tax on knowledge" this formed one of three such taxes which aroused the indignation of all literary men, educationalists, journalists and many far-sighted politicians.

One of the most active of the opponents of these taxes, Mr. Michael James Whitty, may be regarded as the founder of today's well-informed *Liverpool Daily Post*. Born in Wexford and coming to London in 1821, his great gifts brought Whitty to the editorial chair of the *London & Dublin Magazine* in 1823, but afterwards he moved north to found the *Liverpool Journal* in 1829, of which he remained editor and proprietor until 1836. After services to the borough which brought him an award of £1,000 he resumed

literary work, keeping a close watch over every move made in opposition to the Newspaper Stamp Act and being associated more or less directly with two associations formed to urge its immediate abolition. One of these bore the title "Association for the Repeal of all the Taxes on Knowledge". When, in 1851, witnesses appeared before a Parliamentary Commission to enquire into the Newspaper Stamp Act, the advertisement duty, and the paper duty, Whitty not only vigorously advocated abolition of every one of these taxes, but gave his solemn pledge that if and when the taxes were abolished he would immediately issue a daily newspaper to sell at one penny per copy. In fulfilment of that pledge, the *Liverpool Daily Post* came into being.

But that is to anticipate, for much spade work had to follow the commission's report, until W. E. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer and a man whose personal integrity and honest convictions overrode all party considerations, and who did not hesitate to act rightly even if it involved a loss of revenue, recognised the justice of Whitty's argument. Gladstone prepared legislative measures for abolition in 1854 but it remained for his successor to give effect to these measures a year later.

Referring to Whitty's efforts to have the taxes on knowledge abolished, the *Dictionary of National Biography* states—"On removal of these imposts he issued, in 1855, the *Liverpool Daily Post*, the first penny paper published in the United Kingdom. The paper passed out of his hands some years before his death but it has never ceased to hold a prominent place amongst the leading daily newspapers."

Thus three men associated with Liverpool fought and won the fight for a Press free from the taxes on knowledge, those being Whitty himself, W. E. Gladstone, and Lord Derby who succeeded Mr. Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Although the *Liverpool Daily Post* with characteristic modesty has claimed less credit than is given in the biographical entry just quoted, yet undoubtedly the Liverpool Press of the period showed as much initiative as,

and perhaps even more courage, than the corresponding bodies in commerce, shipping and industry. Sir Edward Russell, later the first Lord Russell of Liverpool, joined Whitty in 1860 and succeeded as editor in 1869.

Liverpool's long-established daily shipping newspaper *The Journal of Commerce and Shipping Telegraph* developed from the original *Liverpool Shipping Telegraph*, founded in 1826, and *The Journal of Commerce* first issued in 1861, the owners being Charles Birchall & Sons Ltd. This firm of printers, publishers, Government contractors, lithographers and bookbinders originated in 1876, the founder being Mr. Charles Birchall who, after serving as advertisement manager with Mr. Henry Greenwood, purchased *The Journal of Commerce* in 1880. Some years later the two newspapers amalgamated under the present title *The Journal of Commerce & Shipping Telegraph*.

During the Second World War, when the Government controlled all shipping and all engineering establishments, *The Journal of Commerce & Shipping Telegraph* continued publication, accomplishing what appeared the impossible—the production of a newspaper devoted entirely to ships and shipping without referring to any ship by name, nor her owners, nor her destination. Ultimately the publishers evolved a system whereby approved subscribers obtained a limited news service, the Admiralty itself utilising this to a considerable extent.

Much plant and building having been destroyed during air raids, the firm erected a completely new printing establishment in Redcross St., the foundation stone being laid by the then Lord Mayor of Liverpool, Alderman W. G. Gregson, J.P., in March, 1947, and the opening ceremony being performed by the Minister of Labour, the Rt. Hon. George Alfred Isaacs, M.P., on 17th July, 1948. These new premises provide adequate accommodation for the highly technical processes which have become essential in the integration of the intricate operations required for large-scale book production.

The first evening newspaper in Liverpool, the *Evening*

Express, appeared in 1870. Originally of four pages and with two editions, it developed very rapidly until issues of 12 pages became quite usual. Since 1930 it has been regarded as one of the brightest and most readable of all provincial evening newspapers, the editorial content reaching a particularly high level of wide general interest. Nine years later there followed the *Liverpool Echo* founded by the late Sir (then Mr.) Alexander Jeans, the first newspaper to have a private day wire between its Liverpool and London offices. The *Liverpool Echo* has long been regarded as a leader amongst British evening newspapers and one of the most productive advertising media in the whole country.

The *Liverpool Daily Post* absorbed the *Mercury* in 1904 and changed its name accordingly, but later on dropped the *Daily* and became *The Liverpool Post and Mercury*. In 1925 the proprietors—(the Liverpool Daily Post and Echo Ltd.)—and the proprietors of the *Evening Express* and the *Daily Courier* and the associated printing works (C. Tinling & Company), secured closer cooperation by an exchange of shares to protect the newspapers from the then prevailing tendency towards newspaper chains and to ensure the continuation of local control, separate identity of the two undertakings being maintained. Following the general strike of 1926, the *Daily Courier* became a picture paper but after its initial success this publication was dropped in 1929. Another title change occurred in 1935 when the *Liverpool Post & Mercury* reverted to its older and more popular title *Liverpool Daily Post* by which it is known today.

In his review of ships and shipping which appeared in the centenary souvenir of *The Journal of Commerce & Shipping Telegraph* the late Lord Essendon (then Sir Frederick W. Lewis, Bart.), stated:

“The best possible test to apply to the British Mercantile Marine during the past century is whether it has served efficiently the needs of the country in peace and war. I think the answer unhesitatingly must be in the affirmative, and although at the present time the

shipping industry is passing through one of its periodical cycles of depression, accentuated on this occasion by the aftermath of the war—Government operation of shipping in competitive countries, reduction in the volume of world trade, depreciated exchanges and chaotic consequences—I feel confident that when the tale is told of the current century's achievements and progress, British shipping will still play a prominent, and I hope, a successful part."

That statement, although written in 1926, still holds good in the main. Britain and her Colonies and Dominions have passed through yet another period of war and are now experiencing the inevitable aftermath, both war and aftermath being on a scale larger than anything recorded in history. Yet British ships, after being released from Government control and returning to their original owners, sail unfettered over the Seven Seas and ply once more round the rugged coastlines of the world.

Richly endowed by legend and traditionally a vocation which appeals powerfully to every true-hearted British boy, the sea has a lasting call but shipping and shipowning firms know that only with the aid of British-owned vessels commanded by British trained seamen can the freedom-loving peoples of the world survive. Just as the skilful seamanship of the Royal Navy stands high in the estimation of every sea-girt nation, so the skilful management of the British Mercantile Marine forms a yardstick by which all other shipowning nations measure their efficiency—or lack of it. To Britain, more than to any other nation, belongs credit for swift development from sail to steam and from steam to turbine, in the step from the turbine to the improved types of motorships which marine engineers prophesy will demand still further development in technique, economy, and ease of control. Despite the great progress made during the past century he would be a bold scientist indeed who would place a limit upon the developments likely to occur within the next hundred years.

No period in world history has seen such far-reaching

technical developments as 1850-1950; but apart from this altogether, the outstanding fact emerges that Britain becomes increasingly dependent upon the economy and efficiency of sea transport, more especially during the post-war era when sea transport and only sea transport can bring to these shores sufficient food for the workers and ample raw materials for the factories, and also to carry to near and distant ports the vast array of goods made by the workers in the factories.

Let there be emblazoned over the door of every house, office and factory in Great Britain the basic truth so aptly phrased by Lord Halifax: "Our force of shipping contributed greatly to our trade and safety; now it has become indispensable to our very existence."

The formation and development of a shipping industry that may claim without any exaggeration whatever to serve the whole world, may be cited as a magnificent example of private enterprise unfettered by State control or handicapped by restrictions imposed by acceptance of Government subsidies. The shipowner operating on an economic basis renders a service essential for the survival of civilisation as we know it today.

The transitional period in shipbuilding from wood to iron offers a fascinating avenue leading to many different shipyards around the British coastline and to the indomitable pioneers each one of whom contributed his own share to the development of British merchant ships. For the moment, however, a brief record must suffice. As iron of itself does not float—the raising of sunken axe-heads having vanished with a number of other arts exercised by the Biblical prophets—it seemed a completely impossible material from which to construct ships; and even when a Merseyside shipbuilder proved once more that what seems impossible becomes possible with the application of thought, ingenuity and skill, there still persisted a vast amount of prejudice against iron ships.

This pioneer in the new material, Mr. John Laird, built what seems to have been Merseyside's first iron ship at

Birkenhead about 1830. Although only a lighter, 60 ft. long, this went far in educating the public to a recognition of metal as the material from which more and still more ships would be built. The technique of propulsion, especially as there followed the first iron paddle steamer, developed with unexpected rapidity. Passenger accommodation became more comfortable, and the de-luxe vessel of the period, the *City of Aberdeen*, went so far as to provide baths. The term "de-luxe", however, must be accepted as relative, to judge by Charles Dickens' description of the ship in which he crossed the Atlantic in 1842: "Before descending into the bowels of the ship, we had passed from the deck into a long and narrow apartment, not unlike a gigantic hearse with windows in the sides, having at the upper end a melancholy stove, at which three or four chilly stewards were warming their hands; while on either side, extending down its dreary length, was a long table, over each a rack fixed to the low roof and stuck full of drinking glasses and cruet stands, hinting dismally at rolling seas and heavy weather."

Iron replaced wood in two stages. First, as shipowners felt a doubt as to thin iron sheeting being able to resist blows which might puncture the hull, they used iron for internal framing and wood for the shell or hull. In the next stage they employed iron for both frame and hull.

Five years after the foundation of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce there appeared the first rules governing the scantlings and construction of iron ships but three years later the *Great Eastern*, hailed as a triumph of iron shipbuilding, revolutionised all theories about the size of ocean-going ships. The *Great Eastern* had longitudinal framing very similar to the more recent Isherwood construction, a double bottom that was many years before its time, and was so large that in size she was not exceeded until forty years later.

After the formation of the Institution of Naval Architects a number of far-reaching improvements took place in the technique of shipbuilding and the names of William Froude

and his son, the clergyman Ramus, and Kirk, will always be associated with innumerable ingenious proposals many of which exerted an influence which is in evidence to the present day. The history of shipping onwards is the history of Liverpool, and the history of Liverpool is the history of shipping. They exist by and for each other, a partnership incapable of divorce. Interwoven with every development in this volume, shipping more or less directly (and more rather than less) has become an integral part of Liverpool.

The business of shiprepairing, which during the past 100 years has been developed by Merseyside specialists from a mere carpenter's job into a unique combination of art and science, owes its early origin to a report prepared by a special committee of Lloyd's Register in 1826. This committee made a special point of encouraging shipowners to undertake the regular inspection and maintenance of all sea-going vessels.

Originally repairs to wooden hulls, whereby damages were patched with little or no regard to continuity of strength, left a great deal to mere chance; but as iron replaced wood and as steel replaced iron, there developed a more efficient and relatively simple method of repairing hulls. The steady growth in the size of ships permitted by a metal hull, with improved distribution of the stresses and strains imposed by conditions at sea, resulted in the divisional bulkhead which may have served merely as a screen at one time but gradually developed into divisions making watertight compartments, and ultimately forming an integral part of the whole ship's structure. These watertight compartments frequently enabled a ship to reach port even when more or less seriously damaged. This created a demand for speedy and effective repairs which in turn led to a demand for shiprepairing, involving operations not normally undertaken by shipbuilders. As this demand increased with increasing traffic so the technique of shiprepairing developed.

At times the most difficult and apparently impossible

Lt.-Col. P. G. R. Burford,
T.D., M.A., *secretary*



Mr. J. Caldwell Jones,
committee secretary



Mrs. M. Ault,
*assistant committee
secretary*



Mr. John E. Nicholson,
assistant secretary



Mr. H. M. Thompson,
cashier and office manager

Officials of the Chamber, March, 1950



Lieut-Col. Albert Buckley,
C.B.E., D.S.O., J.P.,
chairman 1928-9



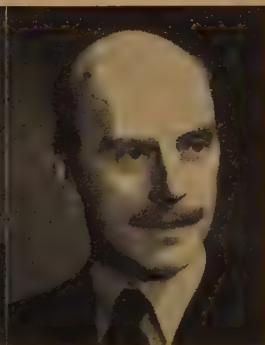
Mr. Arthur D. Dean,
chairman 1933-4



Mr. Picton H. Jones,
chairman 1937-8



Mr. Dan Tobey, J.P.,
chairman 1939-40-41-42



Major R. H. Thornton,
M.C., J.P., *chairman 1945*



Mr. W. H. Perry,
chairman 1946



Mr. W. S. S. Hannay, J.P.,
chairman 1947-8

Seven past chairmen of the Chamber

operations have been accomplished successfully. One half of a ship salvaged after a wreck has been towed into Liverpool and the missing half replaced, after which the reconstructed ship gave many years of economical and indeed highly profitable service. A vessel has been cut in two and a large portion of new keel, hull, and superstructure inserted amidships, again with satisfactory results. Similarly, many ingenious repairs have been made to engines, boilers, and ships' machinery of all types.

More recently, the science of welding has saved many ships' boilers from the scrap heap to which they would have been consigned a few years ago; it is yet too early to prophesy the further developments which may follow as the art of welding reaches a higher state of efficiency, and as research work reveals still greater scope for the effective control of metals under heat during repair work.

The adoption of diesel units, the introduction of turbines and refrigeration, and a vast amount of highly scientific electrical equipment, all widen the scope of and demand for increased technical knowledge from shiprepairers who today render a vital service in every port. Such firms employ boiler-makers, platers, caulkers, blacksmiths, iron and brass founders, patternmakers, engine fitters, turners, millwrights, shipwrights, joiners, cabinetmakers, plumbers, tinsmiths, coppersmiths, electro-platers, sailmakers, upholsterers, riggers, polishers, and painters. A properly equipped and experienced shiprepairing organisation, therefore, must be regarded as integral with the services rendered by every great port and available in cases of emergency, irrespective of the nationality of the ship or her owners and operating to the satisfaction of the great insurance concerns of the world. In this respect Liverpool as a port has provided itself with facilities unsurpassed by any port in the world.

As might be expected in a port having so many intimate links with all forms of industry, commerce, insurance, and banking, Liverpool has had its own Stock Exchange for

over a hundred years, although not until 1893 did the Chamber receive a deputy from the Stock Exchange of Liverpool in the person of Mr. J. Price Hargreaves, a stock and sharebroker of No. 6 Water St., a member of the firm of H. Hargreaves & Son. In 1923 a Mr. H. G. White became deputy, this being, of course, Mr. H. Graham White, M.P., the outstanding figure in Liberalism for many years and one who stoutly supported every movement for the welfare of the port on both sides of the Mersey throughout a distinguished career at Westminster.

Long before the Liverpool Stock Exchange became affiliated, the Chamber had kept in close touch with the stock markets, and as early as 1863 advised members that the Stock Certificates to Bearers Bill had passed both Houses and become law. In 1875, the council of the Chamber resolved to support the Glasgow Chamber in its call for an enquiry into stock exchange speculations. The Glasgow Chamber pointed out that business on the stock exchange had been increased to an extraordinary extent by "time bargains". The parties to those bargains bought and sold without any intention of exchanging the stock in which they were nominally dealing, but intended only to receive or pay "differences" at settling day.

It was stated that the number of *bona fide* transactions formed a mere fraction of the total business transacted and that disclosures in the Bankruptcy Court showed that the majority of those speculators were not only without means but some were clerks on low salaries yet filling positions of trust. This state of affairs, according to the Glasgow Chamber, called aloud for immediate remedy. The Liverpool Chamber agreed that those practices were "only too common everywhere".

Viewed from the stockbrokers' angle Liverpool appeared singularly interesting in those early days. The development of the provincial stock exchanges in this country, and the substantial development of the older London Stock Exchange have taken place within the last 100 years, and the commercial and industrial progress of that time is

clearly reflected in their history. Especially is this the case with Liverpool which has always occupied a prominent place amongst the provincial exchanges.

It may be said that a stock exchange consists of an organised market for the purchase and sale of standardised capital rights; and, therefore, as long as the supply of these arose mainly from forms of public indebtedness, organised dealings were confined to London. At the close of the eighteenth century, the London list included a mere handful of securities, chief among them being different categories of Government debt; the stocks of the East India Company, the South Sea Company, and the Bank of England; two insurance companies, the Royal Exchange, and the London Assurance; and the West and East India Docks. Foreign loans were listed for the first time after 1815; and these were followed later by American canals, Irish funds, and bridge and dock undertakings.

Changes brought about by the industrial revolution as well as the fuller development of joint stock organisations brought an increasing supply of the issued capital of public companies; this in turn stimulated a new interest on behalf of the public in investments both in London and in the provinces. The spectacular growth of railways, prior to the foundation of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, focussed the attention of the investing public upon railway stock. The extent of this change is evident on looking at an early Liverpool price circular which proves that, out of a total of 72 securities, as many as 39 were railway stocks. It is not surprising then to find Liverpool establishing a stock exchange, especially in a city which had already done so much to encourage railway enterprise.

During the nineteenth century Liverpool had transformed itself to a position of wealth and influence, while of the growing commercial importance of the town ample evidence existed. Dock dues increased by ten times in little more than 35 years. As the premier market for cotton, Liverpool had been fairly well established; and Liverpool merchants, in addition to a progressive trade with

North and South America and the West Indies, had commenced with typical enterprise trading into the Far East as soon as the old trade monopolies in India and China were abandoned.

The headquarters of the brokers and merchants who controlled all this thriving business were still within a stone's throw of the exchange; and within a few yards was the original meeting place—the Merchants' Coffee House—of the Liverpool Sharebrokers' Association. This recognised commercial centre, adjoining the old churchyard in Chapel St., served not only as a meeting place for brokers and merchants but also for auction sales. There may have been some confusion about this particular coffee house and the inn known as Horne's Mersey Hotel which Sir James Picton describes as "celebrated for its turtle, and much frequented by passengers from America, in the days before the Atlantic had been bridged by steam." The celebrated Liverpool historian, however, makes it quite clear that while the coffee house stood at the south-west corner of the churchyard, the Mersey Hotel occupied a site at the south-east corner.

The Liverpool Sharebrokers' Association left the coffee house some time during 1836 and rented its own office in Exchange St. West. The founders of the exchange, eleven in number, represented widely different interests, apart from sharebroking. It appears that some specialised in sharebroking as such but others were connected with shipbroking, accountancy, and insurance while others dealt in commodities entirely different from stocks and shares. Amongst the last, one finds a wine merchant, a gunpowder agent, an auctioneer, and "the proprietor of the Floating Bath".

The professional etiquette of those early days did not prohibit advertising. One member of the exchange took every opportunity to "respectfully inform the public that he had been engaged for nearly 20 years in the purchase and sale of shares in the various public companies, canals, railways, steam and gas companies, pews in churches, land,

houses, etc.”. Another member offered “every facility to his friends and the public in the purchase and sale of British and foreign stocks, shares in the various joint-stock companies and other descriptions of property suitable for temporary or permanent investment”.

Although the association at this time comprised over 40 members, it did not include all sharebrokers in the city, and in 1843 a rival body established itself with the title Liverpool New Stock Exchange. This organisation occupied premises in the basement of the Royal Bank Building, but it soon became apparent that two bodies were quite unnecessary, and this led to an amalgamation the following year, when the combined organisations moved into new premises in Queen Avenue, above the Royal Bank.

The years immediately preceding the foundation of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce were marked by intensive speculation in railway shares, and companies projected in 1844 and 1845 represented an aggregate capital of £600,000,000. The market in railway securities exceeded in size and importance everything else except Government stocks, and so extensive became share dealing in Liverpool that the number of stockbrokers increased from fifty-three in 1843 to 187 in 1847 when the market broke. When the bank rate went up to 10 per cent. and the note-issuing limitations imposed by the Bank Act of 1844 were suspended, the Liverpool failures included three banks and many merchant houses but only one sharebroker.

It may be regarded as remarkable that fatalities should have been so low in view of the fact that so many people of entirely different callings had been attracted to share-broking during the boom period.

Shortly after the Chamber's foundation the Liverpool Royal Exchange received notice to quit by the directors of the Royal Bank. It appears that the conduct of the younger members of the exchange had not been in accord with the dignity of the mid-Victorian bank. On the 5th November, during a display of fireworks, some had been thrown from the windows of the exchange, and on another

occasion a dancing bear and its attendant organ-grinder had entered the premises for the amusement of guests. Such conduct could not be tolerated and the bank, therefore, decided to end the tenancy agreement. The dilemma was turned to good account by the committee who were able to secure premises on the west side of Exchange Buildings for which they paid a rental of £700 per annum. A member of the committee exploited the situation still further by sub-letting part of the new accommodation to a telegraph company at a rental of £787 10s. per annum. It has been suggested that this member received his education and early training north of the border, especially as it is understood that the arrangement not only enabled the committee to occupy highly suitable premises rent free but left what was (in those days) quite a substantial margin for providing the most acceptable kind of refreshments for the committee's personal guests.

As in the case of the Chamber itself, which found it highly valuable to be associated with similar bodies in other towns and cities, so the provincial stock exchanges felt it necessary to unite in some similar manner. Consequently the year 1890 witnessed the meeting of a consultative body composed of delegates from all the provincial exchanges, called originally at the instigation of Mr. Edward Rae. This new body immediately set to work by initiating legislation to relieve shareholders from the unfortunate possibilities presented by the well known repudiation of their stock certificates by the North Western Railway Company. The Liverpool Stock Exchange in their centenary celebrations paid tribute to Mr. Edward Rae who not only accomplished highly important work prior to the passing of the Forged Transfers Acts of 1891 and 1892, but also secured the adoption by railway and other companies of the powers conferred by the act which authorised such bodies to protect the interests of their shareholders by creating an insurance fund as a safeguard against forged documents.

As Liverpool proved so largely instrumental in promoting the Forged Transfers Bill, it may be recorded here that

prior to the passing of this legislation it was not possible for holders of stock, even if certified by public companies, to regard their title to such stock as absolute. The necessity for the legislative change was proved by the historic Barton case in which the son of a stockholder sold stock belonging to his mother, forging her signature for the purpose and those of the attesting witnesses. He avoided detection for some time by paying the dividends to his mother in the ordinary way but the appointment of new trustees exposed the fraud. The railway company had not doubted the genuineness of the transfers but when the forgeries became evident, Mrs. Barton sued the company and obtained the return of her stock. In turn, the railway company sued the people who, in all good faith, had bought the stock.

The company was successful in recovering not only the stock but also the dividends which had been paid upon it. The position of the unfortunate shareholders aroused Mr. Rae's sympathy, but the London Stock Exchange, which he anticipated would assume the lead, declined to make any move until public companies had accepted the principle of indefeasible titles to securities. So it fell to Mr. Rae, supported by provincial exchanges and particularly by the Liverpool Stock Exchange, to oppose the London & North Western Railway Company. Ultimately there came into being the Forged Transfers Acts. As a memento of Mr. Rae's success in this matter there now reposes on the Stock Exchange Committee-room table a cigarette box, in the form of a railway waggon, presented to Mr. Rae by the London & North Western Railway Company and suitably inscribed.

The objects of the council of Associated Stock Exchanges remained as they were originally framed "to discuss and consider all questions of general interest, to interchange views upon and devise method for the convenient execution and settlement of business; to assimilate the practice of the several exchanges, and generally to promote the interests of the exchanges and their members."

In furtherance of these aims the council prepared, some time in 1893, a standard code of rules which it submitted to the provincial exchanges and which received the approval of Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, and Sheffield. The two Scottish exchanges held that the proposal, however desirable, would prove impracticable; they went so far as to recommend that the whole idea be abandoned. Faced by this unexpected opposition, Liverpool again took the lead and in due course a new code was accepted by the majority of the exchanges. The situation altered again as the result of the First World War when circumstances demanded a much closer contact between London and the provinces but the *Liverpool Rule Book*, revised in 1923, followed closely upon the London model and the same tendency towards uniformity has operated elsewhere.

Judged by all historical parallels the stock exchanges of Great Britain ought to have been plunged into panic at the outbreak of war. Owing to a number of conditions, however, there was a remarkable steadiness in evidence throughout the period of the most severe tension. Those who understood the situation arrived at shrewd decisions. There existed a solid belief in the capacity of the nation to endure to victory. Undoubtedly the stock exchanges made an immense contribution towards keeping the situation under control at the outset, by accepting the restrictions imposed upon them and by their acquiescence in an entirely new orientation. The Stock Exchange remained closed for the remainder of 1914. Speculation was eliminated and the markets settled down, in due course, to new levels of values. The Liverpool Stock Exchange contributed its quota to the various service units raised in or associated with the Port of Liverpool.

Experience gained during 1914 proved helpful in 1939 when the Liverpool Stock Exchange closed for two days only. Dealings for account and continuations were prohibited, all business being restricted to cash settlement. The outbreak of war in 1939 brought about a closer

relationship with the Treasury and the Bank of England, one important feature of this being in connection with new issues of capital when companies wishing to make an issue of over £50,000 had to obtain sanction from the Capital Issues Committee. Dealing for account was restored in 1946 and continuations in 1949.

The general fund of the exchange, created and built-up through the foresight of earlier members, materially augmented the income which fell with an inevitable reduction in membership: with a return to more normal conditions, however, and an increased number of members, the general fund is now in sound condition. Incidentally, the subscription has been increased, the first increase since 1920. The new Companies Act 1948 makes provision for the London Stock Exchange, the Liverpool Stock Exchange, and certain other large provincial exchanges to grant a certificate of exemption from full compliance with the act in the case of prospectuses where, in the opinion of the committee of the exchange, publication of information as required by the act is not considered necessary. This generally applies to small issues, principally placings. There has been an increase in dealings in local securities, and a number of applications for permission to deal have been granted.

The future of the Stock Exchange must depend very largely upon the survival of private enterprise. The Stock Exchange constitutes an integral part of any commercial community in which private enterprise is allowed its rightful place, for the Stock Exchange not only provides a market in securities but also the means whereby to raise fresh capital for financing industrial developments.

Twelve months after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, a little group of men met at the Crown Inn, Redcross Street, Liverpool, to discuss the possibilities of bringing light into the gloomy streets of Liverpool after nightfall. For citizens of Liverpool to be dependent on link boys carrying smoking torches, with press gang ruffians lurking in every

deep shadow, showed a lack of enterprise inconsistent with the city's usual swift adoption of new ideas in other directions. So it became a coachbuilder, Mr. Jonathan Varty, to convene this meeting and to hear proposals from an engineer by the name of Hargreaves, about how the new "wickless light," or coal gas, might be employed to light the streets. At this time the public knew little or nothing about gas as a source of light, and the first company to supply gas for this purpose had been established only three years previously in London.

In due course, Mr. Varty promoted a public company; and in order to persuade people to support his undertaking he offered to return subscribers' deposits after twelve months if the scheme proved unsuccessful.

Great excitement followed the erection of two gas lamps outside the Liverpool Town Hall. One or two young men, brave enough to keep their hands on the strange looking pipes for a few minutes declared that the latter were becoming hotter and hotter; whereupon the Sun Insurance Company immediately notified Mr. Varty that they would cancel his insurance against fire if he lit the new-fangled lamps. Notwithstanding this, the lamps were lit; and a local newspaper, whose reporter was obviously impressed by the brilliance of the lighting, recorded that "a person may with ease discover the hour by his watch at a distance of 20 or 30 yards".

Many people severely criticised the corporation for allowing flames to be conveyed below the borough's main street, everyone at that time being under the impression that the flames actually passed through pipes on their way to gas burners. Varty persevered in the face of this and much other ill-informed opposition; he was able to float a second company, obtaining a charter of incorporation sanctioning a capital of £50,000. The company had its first office in Dale St., the site at present occupied by police headquarters, and the works were situated immediately behind the present fire station.

At this time gas meters were unknown, the charge for

gas being based on the size and number of the burners employed. For the use of the smallest and cheapest burner, to be used only from sunset until eight o'clock at night, the company charged two guineas per annum with *pro rata* charges for continuing until nine, ten, eleven and twelve o'clock. Nothing was charged if the light remained burning for fifteen minutes after the agreed time; and on Saturdays, as an encouragement to celebrations, every user could burn gas until midnight. History does not record what methods were adopted to ensure that lights were extinguished at the agreed times, but apparently a great deal must have been left to the innate honesty of the consumers.

Later on a rival company, known as the Liverpool Oil Gas Company, interfered with normal developments and soon the new company found itself in difficulty while the citizens obviously disliked having two rival companies providing similar services and devoting so much time and energy to competing with each other that service to the consumer became a secondary consideration. Therefore, in 1848, the two companies amalgamated under the name of the Liverpool United Gas Light Company. New offices built in Newington, remained the headquarters of the company until 1870 when the Cheshire Lines Committee acquired the site on which now stands the Central Station. The Cheshire Lines Committee, however, provided handsome new premises in Duke St.; and these, with extensions from time to time, proved sufficient to cope with the ever-increasing volume of business until the time came for further developments especially in the technique of designing, supplying and maintaining new kinds of appliances for industrial, commercial and domestic use.

The company was now supplying industrialists and manufacturers as well as shopkeepers with heat and power in addition to light. Therefore, in 1914, its name had become clearly out of date and so the title was changed to Liverpool Gas Company.

Soon, however, Duke Street proved inconvenient for

show room and display purposes, and so the company transferred those activities, as well as all office, records, publicity and cash departments to Radiant House, a modern steel-framed building in Bold St. designed by Quiggin and Gee, F.R.I.B.A., the Liverpool architects, equipped in the most efficient manner and one of the most highly organised gas headquarters in Europe, based on the second largest group of undertakings (five in all) and having the second largest output of gas of all undertakings in Great Britain. Today this organisation serves an area of 103 square miles.

The advent and rapid rise to popularity of electric lighting introduced a new, and at the time, unwelcome competitor to the gas industry. However, as a proof that competition is the life of trade, it would be difficult to find anything more convincing than recent developments in the gas industry. The industry gracefully admits that electricity probably excels gas for lighting purposes but continues to convince the most hard-headed of Lancashire business men that gas offers a much superior method for almost every other purpose in industry.

Following Lenoir's invention of the gas engine, gas became more widely used as a driving power but more recently it has been adopted in heat processes and today almost every industry utilises gas in one form or another. In Liverpool gas served as a substitute for the sunshine of the tropics, as millions of bananas ripened in its genial heat until the year 1939. The hotels, restaurants, and biscuit manufacturers in Liverpool consume millions of therms every year while engineering works and the manufacturers of electrical appliances are also large scale consumers. So whether it be for heating or for freezing, in ensuring automatic control of temperature, or producing the infra-red rays for drying purposes, gas continues to serve the port and city with an efficiency typical of the tradition established so firmly by the undertaking which in 1949 passed into public ownership.

Of the many distinguished people associated with the

Liverpool undertaking from time to time, mention might be made of the Right Hon. Oliver Stanley, M.P., distinguished member of a family which has given selfless service to Liverpool and Lancashire all down the years. At the formal opening of Radiant House, Mr. Stanley paused for a moment in the middle of his speech, looked into the far distance, smiled and said to the waiting assembly "No! No! the figures I have just quoted are wrong . . ." Then after a moment's hesitation he resumed with that quizzical smile which Liverpool people appreciate so highly—"You see ladies and gentlemen, I happen to know more about this particular point than the very helpful fellow who wrote this speech for me".

The manufacture and distribution of gas must be a healthy occupation, over 250 employees of the Liverpool undertaking having given 35 years' service or more to the Liverpool Gas Company. At the time of passing into public ownership this company employed some 2,500 people and as it also pioneered the principle of co-partnership, the employees' financial interest in stocks and savings amounted to almost a quarter of a million pounds sterling.

The supply of gas to 250,000 households (few of which have any alternative method of cooking) must be admitted a serious responsibility. Yet now and again a vein of humour enriches the daily routine. On one occasion a Bold St. resident complained that her gas meter had frozen, despite the most careful precautions—she had even gone so far as to place some hot water in the meter cupboard. What she quite omitted to explain, however, was that to keep the water hot all through the winter's night she had placed it in a vacuum flask, tightly corked. One gas consumer, asked to describe his meter when making a complaint, said that it was "one of them penny-in-the-pound kind." A small girl arrived at the offices early one morning demanding that an inspector come immediately to her mother's house as she felt sure the meter had mice in it. At a higher social level, a lady in Princes Park locked up her house and departed for a two months holiday in

the South of France. On returning to Liverpool she found the bedroom gas fire still burning. (Gas is *so* reliable!) Although this appeared highly humorous to some of the officials there was at least one person who failed to see the funny side when the company's bill was presented.

It may be news to the present generation, still retaining vivid memories of the impressive ceremonial opening of Queensway by King George V. in July, 1934, that the Chamber had given earnest thought to cross-river communication considerably more than half a century earlier. Proposals for a free steam ferry had been before the Council during the year 1868, and a committee specially appointed to consider these proposals presented a lengthy report in January, 1869. Many of the arguments then advanced in support of a ferry proved just as effective and just as urgent later on, when ferry traffic increased to such an extent as to render necessary a quicker method altogether, i.e. a roadway beneath the River Mersey. The report received by the council on 27th January 1869 and "ordered to be printed for the use of the council," and reserved for further consideration, began:

"The question of a free ferry or steam bridge for transporting goods in carts across the Mersey may be considered with reference to the advantages which such a facility for commerce would afford; first to the public and secondly to the dock estate."

The report emphasised that the traders of Liverpool and (so far as there were any) of Birkenhead, would find their interests greatly promoted. A comparison was drawn with other towns; for instance how much London would suffer without bridges across the Thames and similarly, Newcastle, Glasgow and Dublin would find their commercial transport gravely hampered, if not rendered almost impossible, without a bridge across the Tyne, Clyde and Liffey, respectively. The report suggested that for shipping purposes Birkenhead was hardly any more convenient to Liverpool merchants than Holyhead.

Liverpool manufacturers could not extend their premises owing to the high cost of land on their side of the river nor could they utilise the cheaper land on the Cheshire side. Not only Liverpool and Birkenhead, but the whole of England, suffered from the lack of cross-river transport.

“Goods must be sent by a round-about route and freights are thereby unduly enhanced. But quite apart from these local inconveniences it must be obvious that whatever hinders the efficient and economical working of the dock estate must increase the cost of living for everyone, be he merchant, manufacturer, shipowner or consumer; the food and the goods consumed by those people, or else the machinery by which such commodities are made are almost bound to pass through the Mersey as a main channel of the world’s commerce.”

From the point of view of the dock estate, the report emphasised that there was no greater hindrance than the want of a free and ready means of transport for goods between the two disconnected parts of the estate. It would be remarkably easy to establish a service of steam boats across the river. The transport service then operating had proved highly unsatisfactory and, therefore, had kept the traffic down to a minimum. The example was quoted of a Birkenhead engineer who stated that it cost him less to deliver machinery to London than to Liverpool! The construction of a proper ferry or steam bridge would enable all Liverpool business to be conducted almost as conveniently through the Birkenhead docks as the Liverpool docks.

After going into many further details about the proposed service by means of a steam ferry boat, the report concluded with an estimate of the cost of three such boats and the expense of operating them. Each boat would carry 24 lorries each of 4-ton pay-load, the boats being 180 ft. long, 35 ft. beam and 140 h.p., costing £17,500 each. Working expenses were estimated at £5,750 per boat working a 12-hour day including 15 per cent. for interest, depreciation and insurance, the total for three boats representing a total

overall cost of £15,500. Assuming that only one half of the pay load be carried on each of the 12 daily trips, the cost of transporting goods would be rather under 11d. per ton. But if this be taken at 1/- per ton, it amounted to only two-thirds of the normal dock-rate for incoming foreign cargoes.

No serious opposition could be made to a report so thoroughly convincing, detailed, practical and logical, and in due course the whole of Merseyside benefited to such an extent that Wirral not only became the "dormitory of Liverpool" but an unexpected number of people living in Liverpool found lucrative employment in Birkenhead. Then the industrial parts of Birkenhead, Bromborough, Port Sunlight, Cheshire and North Wales, which were to develop with a rapidity that no one had foreseen, found increased scope for their goods and services as the result of economical contact with consumers on and beyond the Mersey's right bank. As these activities multiplied a thousandfold, the need for quicker and more direct communication became obvious, especially as docks, ship-building and ancillary industries in Birkenhead assumed national as well as greater local importance.

On two occasions during 1913, the council considered a suggestion that the embarrassing amount of cross-river traffic should be eased by constructing a bridge over the Mersey, but after taking all points of view into consideration, the council decided to take no action at that time. In May, 1919, the council sanctioned the formation of a special committee for the purpose of considering the co-ordination of traffic of the port, and to make proposals as to how the existing congestion could be relieved. This committee included representatives of the principal interests concerned and at its first meeting elected Mr. Lawrence Holt as chairman. The committee sat every week and collected evidence from all parties on every aspect of the traffic problem. During its enquiry, the committee helped to bring about a conference of the local authorities of Liverpool, Birkenhead, Bootle and Wallasey

along with the Dock Board and railway companies so that they might consider what improvements could be made in cross-river communication.

The special committee finally reported that they had been deeply impressed by the need for an improved means of communication across the Mersey. They were persuaded that a much more ambitious treatment of the problem must be evolved so as to ensure the fullest possible development of the country's industrial life of which the port of Liverpool was the main gateway. Furthermore, they considered that if the port was to thrive, there must be a free flow of traffic within and through all sections of the port, docks, and town; and while they did not express any opinion as to the advantages of any particular scheme of cross-river communication, they believed that nothing short of free communication for road and rail vehicles would meet the necessities of the case. The committee urged the Chamber of Commerce to press unceasingly on those in authority to co-operate with all parties in seeking a solution of the traffic problem. There followed a meeting under the Chamber's auspices in December, 1921, when the late Sir William Forwood delivered a highly informative speech on the subject. On this occasion the late Lord Derby, president of the Chamber, was unable to attend but he authorised the chairman (Mr. James P. Rudolf), to state that he (Lord Derby) was ready to consult with the Lord Mayor of Liverpool and the chairman of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board with the object of arranging a conference, limited in number but representative of the various interests in the district for the purpose of exploring this whole matter. Lord Derby also suggested that if this conference were arranged, it might be found desirable in the first instance to appoint some eminent traffic and engineering authority to advise on the technical matters involved and to report what, in his opinion, should be done.

In his address Sir William Forwood gave an exhaustive review of the various points which must be taken into

consideration. He stressed the importance of linking up all parts of the dock estate and brought into focus the transport needs of the whole area, a matter to which the council had already given much attention. He referred to the time when he was president of the Chamber, fifty-one years previously, and stated that while in his day the Chamber's fight had been to obtain from the railway companies a recognition of the geographical position of Liverpool, the fight in the future would be to find room for the traffic which this position would bring to its door.

Sir William invited members to visualise the position of Liverpool as a port. Along the west coast of Great Britain, from the Clyde to Land's End, a distance of over 400 miles, Liverpool had the only deep-water harbour which now, thanks to systematic dredging, formed an open port at all times and seasons. Not only had they this great deep-water harbour as one of the main attractions of the port but Liverpool itself existed in close proximity to the great manufacturing centres. If Liverpool were closed as a port, it would be national disaster; if London were closed, it would only be a national inconvenience. The traffic which centred in London would find other outlets quite naturally, for the greater part had to be conveyed long distances by rail in any case.

After explaining in detail the disadvantages of existing cross-river communications, Sir William went on to reply to the question "How are we to link Liverpool with Birkenhead—by bridge or tunnel?" A bridge had been the accepted mode of crossing rivers and streams from the very earliest times, and although bridges had been superseded by tunnels in many cases yet America had proved that bridges could be constructed satisfactorily across wide spaces. The bridges over the East River and the Hudson River, New York, would exceed in one span the distance from Liverpool to Birkenhead. Various bridges had been suggested for crossing the Mersey; one specification published in 1898 proposed starting on the Liverpool side at St. George's Crescent, with an approach

62 ft. wide, along Strand Street, to the riverside at Wapping Dock. This plan visualised a bridge in three spans supported by two piers in the bed of the river, reaching the Cheshire side at Monks' Ferry, and from there to Hamilton Square, Birkenhead, the total distance being approximately two miles and the estimated cost £2,714,000.

The other alternative was a tunnel. Having experienced the exact formation of the river bed during the construction of the Mersey Railway tunnel, there appeared no difficulty in driving a tunnel for road traffic and the engineers responsible for the Mersey Railway tunnel had very kindly given Sir William Forwood considerable assistance in formulating some idea of the most suitable line and approaches.

Dealing with the financial aspect, Sir William deeply regretted that the Government did not recognise the importance of Liverpool as a port either now or in the future. He suggested obtaining power to construct a tunnel by Act of Parliament so that the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board might be able to play their part in a scheme vital to the development of their dock estate yet at the same time enabling them to co-operate with the four municipal authorities bordering the estuary.

After outlining the disadvantages of a bridge with its high cost of construction and maintenance, Sir William concluded "Taking everything into consideration I am disposed to favour the construction of tunnels lined with iron which would make them water-tight and there would be little or no expense for pumping".

After considerable discussion the meeting concluded by a comment from Sir William about work "which was taken out of the hands of Chambers of Commerce who did it very well, and undertaken by the Government who did it very badly".

Shortly after this address, which was quoted widely in the national and technical Press, the council formed a committee—the Merseyside Co-ordination Committee—to investigate the whole matter, the chairman being Sir

Archibald Salvidge, K.B.E., an indefatigable worker for the prosperity of Liverpool generally and for cross-river communication in particular. His name will always be associated with the early stages of the tunnel's construction, to the planning and development of which he gave unstintingly of his time and talents until his untimely death in 1928.

In July, 1923, the Chamber had before it a report by the engineers dealing fully with the two alternative methods of relieving this traffic problem which caused, directly and indirectly, so much serious loss in time and money to Merseyside, and indeed to the whole country, as commercial vehicles queued at the landing stage for hours at a time awaiting ferry boats totally inadequate in number and capacity for the traffic. Technical experts, Sir Maurice Fitzmaurice, C.M.G., Mr. Basil Mott, C.B., and Mr. John A. Brodie, M.Inst.C.E., invited to advise the committee, recommended a tunnel rather than a bridge.

Then followed the negotiations with H.M. Government, the committee asking for a grant. An offer of £1,500,000, approximately one-third of the estimated cost, was made in May, 1924, but was refused as being inadequate. A second offer, amounting to about one-half of the cost, was made but the committee considered this unacceptable. Ultimately the Government offered to contribute 75 per cent. of the cost and on this basis negotiations were brought to an end. The council fully discussed all points in connection with the proposed tunnel at its meeting in March and the following resolution was passed unanimously:

“That this Chamber confirms that it is vital . . . that a tunnel should be constructed under the Mersey with as little delay as possible.

“While considering national interests the Chamber is of the opinion that development of road communications linking up the docks, warehouses, railways and industries of this area is necessary for the maintenance and development of the trade of the port . . .

“The Chamber . . . strongly supports the proposal that immediate steps be taken to promote a Bill in this session of Parliament to proceed with the construction of a tunnel.

“The Chamber further recognises that the early inauguration of this work would afford relief to unemployment not only in this district but also in those industries . . . called upon to make and supply the materials . . .

“The Chamber desires at the same time to place on record that their approval of a tunnel scheme as an urgent necessity in no way alters their view, constantly expressed, that a through trunk road between Liverpool, East Lancashire and Yorkshire is equally of national and local importance and necessary for the completion of the whole scheme of inter-communication.”

It may be mentioned here, although reference will be found to this matter elsewhere in the present volume, that throughout all its discussions during many years previously the Chamber and many of its committees had repeatedly emphasised the necessity of better road communication between the Port of Liverpool and the inland towns served by it. Largely as a result of the Chamber's insistence on this matter there was to come into being, later on, the East Lancashire road. It may also be remarked here that even in the year 1950, half a century after the need was being pressed by the Chamber, Liverpool is still unconnected by a commercial highway with Yorkshire; and even the existing East Lancashire road has no direct link with either the Liverpool docks or Yorkshire.

In discussions as to the point at which vehicles leaving Liverpool would enter the tunnel, members of the Chamber's transport committee strongly recommended an entrance at Old Haymarket, rather than one in Whitechapel. The former site, with its obvious opportunities for marshalling traffic prior to entering, should certainly have the tunnel committee's earnest consideration. In any case, the cost of purchasing and demolishing large sections of

property in Whitechapel would be very high, whereas property in and adjacent to Haymarket belonged to the Corporation. A protest to the Tunnel Joint Committee, however, produced the reply that it was not possible to alter the site from the one originally chosen in Whitechapel. Even co-ordination committees, however, have found it necessary to achieve what is considered impossible.

In fact Liverpool has frequently achieved the impossible and for some time a large factory concentrating on work of national importance had this motto painted in letters 12 in. high on the assembly shop walls: *The impossible we do at once. Miracles take a little longer.*

Those who appreciate the qualities of Liverpool business men and who understand something of the vision so typical of the Chamber will not be surprised to find that today the main entrance to the tunnel is the one originally advocated by the Chamber, namely in Old Haymarket.

Following the conferring of the city's Freedom on the chairman of the Mersey Tunnel Joint Committee the council passed a resolution of congratulation and good wishes to Sir Archibald Salvidge on the high honour conferred upon him in recognition of his valuable work in connection with the Mersey tunnel scheme. The resolution concludes: "Also the council desire to convey to the Liverpool City Council, through Sir Archibald Salvidge, as leader of that body, their satisfaction that the proposed trunk road between Liverpool and the manufacturing districts of East Lancashire and south-west Yorkshire may now be considered as assured, owing to the support given to the scheme by Liverpool."

Being so closely in touch with transport generally, as well as with the Mersey Tunnel proposals, it seemed quite natural for the council of the Chamber to be invited by Sir William Bull to express its views on the cross-channel tunnel which he proposed should be constructed between England and France. The council entertained Sir William to luncheon after which he propounded his own views in the matter, and later on the council was requested

to give a reply to several vital points. The replies given by the council to those points were not quite so tactfully expressed as the views formulated at the same time by the president, Lord Derby. In this matter it is interesting to record that despite his very close association with, and deep friendship for, France, Lord Derby stressed that the channel tunnel proposal must be considered from the financial side. He stated that he would prefer to see the council accepting the principle but would ask to be fully acquainted with the complete financial details before giving its approval.

Plans for the Mersey Tunnel were submitted to Parliament in 1925, which by the passing of the Mersey Tunnel Act, 1925, vested in a statutory body known as the Mersey Tunnel Joint Committee. No time was lost in making a start, the first drills being put into operation by H.R.H. Princess Mary, Viscountess Lascelles, in December, 1925. Alterations to the original plans were made as circumstances demanded. These included altering the main Liverpool entrance to the Old Haymarket and changing the Birkenhead entrance from Woodside to Chester street.

Ventilation constituted one of the main problems and also involved certain alterations in the original scheme. The ventilating shafts form perhaps the most arresting visible indication of the existence of the tunnel, being conspicuous architectural features which have been much admired owing to their simple beauty and dignity of outline. Originally it was anticipated that the boroughs of Bootle and of Wallasey would co-operate and share responsibilities but this did not turn out so, and thus Liverpool and Birkenhead remain as the sole partners in one of the largest and most ambitious underwater constructions of the century.

The estimated cost, as one might expect, was exceeded by a very considerable amount and the total cost in round figures proved to be £8,000,000. Thus Liverpool ceased to be "the end of the road" and now forms a great pivotal point on the main national highway.

With the outbreak of war in 1939 all necessary precautions were taken to protect what proved to be an immense national asset. It is quite impossible to over-estimate the value of the Mersey Tunnel to the Service departments, particularly with so many units based in Wirral. From time to time the tunnel was closed to civilian traffic in order that immense loads might be taken from one side of the river to the other, loads at no time visualised by the original engineers. Quite apart from the length of the vehicles and the number of trailers following them, the width frequently exceeded 20 ft. and sometimes exceeded 30 ft. so that the tunnel became a one-way thoroughfare on such occasions. Despite its vulnerability, especially the entrances and the ventilating shafts, the whole tunnel organisation escaped damage and emerged from wartime experiences to continue to serve the commercial community and the nation, virtually forming part of the British highway system. On that account alone most people agree that Liverpool and Birkenhead should be relieved of their present liabilities and that the Mersey Tunnel should be taken over by the Ministry of Transport as a highway serving the nation and Empire.

There can be few organisations, if indeed any at all, which although avowedly devoted to commerce, yet have achieved so much in improving conditions for Europeans and natives in the tropics as the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and its West African (originally known as the African) section. How many people today, knowing of the unique achievements of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, realise that this institution, of international repute and international importance, originated with the chairman of the African Trade section's offer made in 1898 to contribute a sum of £350 per annum, this sum to be devoted to furthering the study of tropical diseases at the Royal Southern Hospital, Liverpool? The chairman of course was Mr. Alfred L. Jones (later Sir Alfred), who subsequently became chairman of a com-

mittee to consider the best method of carrying out the intentions of the donor.

The offer had been inspired by an item in the section's report for 1899 stating that while the Royal Society proposed to send a commission to Central and West Africa to investigate the subject of African malarial fevers, yet "nothing had been definitely settled." At the same time attention was being drawn to a disquieting report on blackwater fever, this report having been reprinted at the chairman's expense from *The Shipping Telegraph* and widely circulated. In reality, however, the Chamber's anxiety went back even further; to 1895, in fact, when increasing unhealthiness in West Africa led the West African section's committee to express alarm at the high death rate. It believed that this was due very largely to bad water and had already made urgent representations to the Secretary of State for the Colonies requesting that water supplies should be investigated and that every effort should be made in other directions to improve health in British West Africa.

The high death rate continued in 1896 and at the Chamber's request, Mr. Chamberlain inaugurated investigations which indicated that deaths were most numerous amongst those engaged in outdoor occupations. The committee urged that a specialist should be appointed to enquire into the origin and treatment of blackwater fever and of malaria. Mr. Chamberlain directed attention to papers contributed by Dr. (subsequently Major and later Sir Ronald) Ross and Dr. Grant. The committee also received a communication from Dr. E. Adam, of Liverpool, in which it was suggested that a Frenchman, M. Laveran, in 1882, had discovered the presence of a parasite in the blood of those who suffered from malaria.

After much valuable and essential preliminary work, and following Sir Alfred Jones' generous offer, there came into being the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine in 1889 with a committee comprising representatives of the Chamber, the University College, the Liverpool Southern Hospital, and the Liverpool Ship and Steamship Owners'

Association with Sir Alfred Jones as chairman, Professor Boyer as dean, and Major Ross as lecturer. The school wasted no time. Three months after its inauguration it despatched an expedition to Freetown, Sierre Leone, led by Major Ross, to investigate the causes of malarial fever. The expedition arrived on 10th August at Freetown and left on 27th September. On 2nd September, the committee of the school despatched Dr. R. Fielding-Ould, who joined the first expedition at Freetown and afterwards proceeded to the Gold Coast and Nigeria returning to England in December. Two lectures on the subject of "Malaria and Mosquitoes" were delivered at University College, and Major Ross addressed the West African section on his expedition to West Africa soon after his arrival in this country. The Royal Society elected Major Ross a fellow in recognition of his valuable discoveries in the transmission and treatment of malarial fevers.

Major Ross's addresses to members of the section were printed and widely circulated in this country and in West Africa. The section also reprinted and circulated a series of lectures on "Elementary Hygiene" by Dr. Hendry Strachan, the Chief Medical Officer of Health in Lagos, Nigeria. Those lectures, phrased in simple English and within the understanding of most West Africans' elementary knowledge of English, dealt with sanitation, the nature and cause of disease, parasites, germs, consumption, smallpox, vaccination, blood, malaria parasites, and yellow fever. It also included a lantern demonstration on the "Life Cycle of Malaria Parasites".

Early in 1903 the school circulated a leaflet on "Sanitary Instructions for the Use and Observance of Agents of Firms and Companies in Malarial Places". Even in those early days the school spared neither energy nor money in investigating malaria in all its forms, in ascertaining its cause, and in discovering means for its prevention. At one time it was necessary to emphasise that although so much of the work had been carried on in West Africa, yet

malaria claims its victims in Southern Europe and in South America, the West Indies, India, China and the East. In a city of cosmopolitan interests, such as Liverpool where the ramifications of business extend to every region of the globe the discoveries and recommendations of the school must prove of immense value and must appeal to every business firm which has the welfare of its employees at heart.

The rapid growth of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine is indicated by the fact that in 1908 it sponsored five expeditions. These were the yellow fever expedition, the sleeping sickness expedition, the blackwater fever expedition, the malaria expedition and the expedition to Jamaica. A part of the expense was met by the Government and part by the British South Africa Company. By the end of 1908 the school had devoted over £26,000 of its resources to expeditions in tropical regions. This had grown to over £100,000 by the end of 1912. At this time the school announced its intention of issuing four bulletins each year. Five years previously the publication of *Annals of Tropical Medicine and Parasitology* had begun a publication with a wide circulation amongst those most likely to benefit from the research carried on by the school and the results of the school's policy in its expedition work.

Students at the school increased in numbers and in 1912 there were 54, including officers of the Colonial Medical Service, the Indian Medical Service, the West African Medical Service and the Royal Army Medical Corps.

New premises in Pembroke Place, opened by Lord Leverhulme in 1920, provided an occasion for appealing to the commercial community for still further support. The immediate objective was £100,000 for the maintenance of the school in its new home and for the upkeep of a special laboratory then being erected at Sierra Leone. The letter from the secretary sent to all members of the African Trade section made practical suggestions about alternative ways in which companies and firms having European employees in West Africa could contribute a *per capita*

amount to achieve the necessary total. At the same time, however, the doubtful trade outlook prevented this appeal having its maximum effect, with the result that the work of the school had to be curtailed to some extent. The appeal was renewed in 1923 with more satisfactory results. In 1925 promises were made of a donation of £100 per annum for five years, another donation of £250, a third of £20 for five years and many smaller donations, the firms making those donations apparently being thoroughly convinced that their own interests had benefited to a considerable extent, as the health of their European staffs showed improvement, thus indirectly saving money.

Despite all this proof of the school's practical value, another appeal for funds became necessary in 1929, one result of this being that a member of the African Trade section promised an annual subscription of £1 per head for every European engaged in West Africa or on board the ships belonging to his company. Welcome additional support from the Colonial Government enabled extensions to be made at the Sierra Leone laboratory in 1935.

The next important development was the extension of premises in Pembroke Place involving a capital outlay of £7,000 in 1939, but work at Sierra Leone had to be terminated in that year owing to changes brought about by war time conditions at Freetown. In Liverpool from 1940 onwards, large numbers of medical officers from the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force attended courses of instruction in tropical medicine, while many cases of tropical diseases, developing aboard ships before or on their arrival in the port, received immediate attention from the school's staff. Inoculations were given to non-Africans resident in or about to visit West Africa, this service proving of immense value to organisations outside the Services which had to despatch personnel overseas. Over 1,400 in-patient cases were treated in Liverpool hospitals by the school during war time and more than 3,000 out-patients attended the school. In addition, some 20,000 specimens for clinical pathological examination were dealt with.

The school arranged for the concentration of patients in a single area, and later a special centre with 300 beds was inaugurated for the investigation of difficult and obscure cases. Medical officers of the three Services totalled almost 2,000 since the inception of the special courses.

No one can deny the vital importance of the services rendered by the school to medical science and research which ultimately benefits the whole community. Few people realise that not so very long ago it was regarded as unusual for a white man to live more than six months in any of the British West African possessions. The great African traveller, Mary Kingsley, quotes the instance of a new Governor appointed to Sierra Leone; on taking up his appointment he asked the Colonial Government if his passage was paid home at the end of his six months' tour. This placed the Colonial Office in rather an awkward position; it had to admit that until that time no Governor had survived as long as six months' service! Today, thanks very largely to the indefatigable work of the scientists and of the organisers of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, there are thousands of white men serving for eighteen months in the worst part of West Africa without conditions having any adverse effect upon their health.

Since the very beginning there have existed the happiest relationships between the Chamber and the school; and to this day the secretariat of the Chamber acts as secretariat for the school.

CHAPTER FIVE

Early 20th Century Liverpool.

THE twentieth century dawned with Britain still fighting in South Africa and sending new reinforcements (including contingents of volunteers from Canada, Australia and New Zealand) under the direct command of Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener. Tension eased with the relief of Kimberley and Ladysmith, followed almost immediately afterwards by the capture of Pretoria. Although fighting did not end at that point, however, everyone anticipated a British victory for many months before the final declaration of peace in June, 1902. Apart from the families of men directly concerned in the campaign, Liverpool seems to have been largely unaffected by the South African War. At times only the merest indirect reference appears in the records of important trade and professional bodies of the time, while many omit the war completely.

That Liverpool made speedy preparations to resume trading with South Africa on a scale larger than ever before, and with a minimum of delay after peace was signed, becomes quite evident from records which witness to the Chamber's deep concern about the South African Shipping Conference's alleged preferential rates granted by the conference to "foreigners." While the question appears to have been raised originally by the Leeds Chamber in 1902, and although the Bristol Chamber had already summoned a meeting of Midland and West of England Chambers to consider the matter a month later, it was the Liverpool Chamber which took the most effective action by passing a powerfully-phrased resolution and forwarding a copy to twenty-five of the most progressive chambers of commerce in Great Britain, inviting delegates

from each of those chambers to attend a meeting in Liverpool to discuss the whole matter. Although this invitation had been accepted by many chambers, the meeting proved unnecessary or—in the phraseology employed at the time—"further discussion was held to be undesirable." This new development was due entirely to the Liverpool Chamber's vigorous protest which led to an action at law against the conference. Ultimately a compromise satisfactory to all parties appears to have been reached; and once more the Chamber's prompt decisive action, and its steadfast resolve to maintain the rights of the commercial community, redressed what would have been a gross injustice.

The death of Queen Victoria concluded a reign of over sixty years during which had been carefully forged that link which is held in such high esteem by British people and people with British sympathies all over the globe—that unbreakable yet intangible link of the Crown and the Royal Family which to this day, despite sweeping constitutional changes in countries once regarded as integral with the British Empire, unites freedom-loving citizens of widely different origin, education, religion, and nationality. Today we can rejoice that Edmund Burke's contention still obtains: "Kindred blood and common memories are ties which, though light as air, are yet as strong as links of iron." Queen Victoria, if she did nothing else in her long and at times troubled reign, bequeathed to her successors and subjects those "ties, light as air yet strong as links of iron" which now have the elasticity and flexibility of mild steel and yet form a union of spirit far exceeding any material symbol or legal constitution or national boundary. Realising this today, perhaps slightly more regard might be shown to the memorial towards which the Liverpool City Council made a grant of £6,000: the foundation stone was laid by Field Marshal Lord Roberts in 1902, and the completed memorial unveiled by H.R.H. Princess Alice in 1906.

With the new monarch, Edward VII, came new person-

alities, new political developments, and a new policy of social reform. The trade unions began to expand swiftly, and a new Socialist party preached the gospel of social reform. Lord Salisbury's successor enjoyed but a brief three-year period of office until the advent of the Campbell-Bannerman team which originally included Sir Edward Grey, R. B. Haldane, Lloyd George, and many others who were to rise to high office on the tide of social reform during the first quarter of the century.

Although certain changes were instituted during Campbell-Bannerman's premiership, they merely paved the way for far-reaching and indeed revolutionary reforms affecting the life of every citizen, most notable being the Old Age Pensions Act (1908), and the National Health Insurance Act (1911). Regular Army re-organisation by Haldane had the support of a re-organised volunteer force in the Territorial Army (Territorial and Reserve Forces Act, 1907) and payment for Members of Parliament widened the circle from which candidates could be drawn. The "People's Budget" described by its author, David Lloyd George, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Campbell-Bannerman government, as the means whereby he could "take money away from the rich in order to help the poor," set an example which has been followed with equal enthusiasm and increasing severity by all his successors.

The Lloyd George proposals laying upon the whole business community such grievous burdens, it is not surprising to find that the House of Lords, although not normally interfering with a finance measure, refused to pass the Budget. This led to a head-on clash between Commons and Lords, and to the first General Election of 1910 when the Liberal party were returned, albeit with a much reduced majority. The *contretemps* brought about by Lloyd George's Budget (passed in 1910 by the Lords) soon led to another and even more controversial measure, the Parliament Bill which deprived the Lords of most of their power, leaving only that of delaying bills. This bill being

rejected by the Lords, a second General Election followed in 1910, and again the Liberals were returned to power. The death of King Edward VII and accession of George V might have led to grave constitutional crises at this time of political heat, but the Prime Minister displayed considerable statesmanship in handling matters. He assured the Commons that it would be perfectly constitutional for the King to create sufficient numbers of new Liberal peers to pass the Parliament Bill; this convinced the Lords that further opposition must be fruitless and the Parliament Act, Reform of the Constitution, found its place in the Statute Book in 1911.

Against this political background of the early twentieth century, with men of immense intellectual stature striding unopposed across the stage, there must be shown other actors in the great drama of Liverpool's commerce, industry, and shipping. Trade committees and their far-seeing chairmen nobly strove to develop transactions—both export and import—between Britain and France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Turkey, Portugal, Morocco, the Philippines, Brazil, the Argentine, Australia and South Africa. As evidence of the enterprise brought to bear upon problems common to all commercial firms at that time, there might be mentioned an important firm of shipowners who, anxious to develop trade with Canada, offered a free passage across the Atlantic, all expenses paid both ways, to anyone who would undertake to examine and report on the scope of trade between United Kingdom and Canada. Another exporter proposed that an association of British manufacturers be formed, with offices and warehouses in Mexico City and shipping offices in Liverpool, to develop trade between Britain and Central and South America, particularly with Mexico itself.

A unique social event draws attention to the status so long associated with chairmanship of the Chamber. In 1901 a banquet, attended by over 600 prominent figures in Liverpool, Merseyside and London, provided occasion for the commercial community to congratulate the chairman

of the Chamber, Sir Alfred L. Jones, on his appointment to the most distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George; the guests on this occasion included Lord Derby, the Lord Bishop of Liverpool, Sir T. J. Brunner and Sir John Willox. Amongst important and influential shipping figures of the day there must be mentioned Mr. T. H. Ismay pioneer of the iron ship and responsible for the building and operation of fleets which have held their own—and more than held their own as a rule—with competitors in Britain, on the Continent, and in the United States. First to commission an outside contractor to equip the passenger accommodation, (which had previously been constructed by the shipyard joiners' shop), Mr. Ismay led the way in many other directions, and much of the de-luxe interior of today's Atlantic liners has developed from his sagacity and foresight in the twentieth century's first decade.

The Cunard Company in 1903 embarked upon the construction of two new ships designed to be the largest and fastest of their type in the world. One of these, the *Lusitania*, became a casualty in the First World War. The other, the *Mauretania*, proved to be an immense success in every way, winning and holding the Blue Riband of the Atlantic for over a quarter of a century. Propelled by Parsons marine steam turbines, developing 70,000 h.p., the *Mauretania* measured 760 ft. in length, 88 ft. in breadth, with a gross tonnage of 32,000, accommodating 2,335 passengers and a crew of 812.

Liverpool's main activities in commerce at this period consisted of cotton, iron and metal industries, tobacco, and trading with East India, China and West Africa. The section dealing with West Africa had been developed to an extent which necessitated separate divisions as—for example—"Affairs of the Gambia," "Affairs of the Gold Coast," "Affairs of Nigeria," and so on; nor were these divisions confined to countries within the British Empire, for merchants took a keen interest in Liberia and Dahomey. It became usual, too, to have addresses on some topical

subject during or shortly after the Chamber's annual meeting.

The dawn of a new century brought many additional responsibilities to the Chamber, while many others had to be carried forward from the old. Its initial fifty years, however, had so firmly established the Chamber's reputation (not only amongst manufacturers, merchants, and shippers in the United Kingdom but also throughout the whole world) that the Lord Mayor, presiding at the fiftieth annual meeting, explained that he had granted the use of the Town Hall on this occasion "because there was no more important institution connected with the city than the Chamber of Commerce." Had the Lord Mayor been provided with a pre-view of the Chamber's next fifty years, however, he might well have refused to believe that a single body, no matter how carefully constituted, could continue to serve with immense efficiency and enterprise the entire commercial community and simultaneously cooperate (with benefit to every citizen and the whole nation) in matters so diverse as the Mersey Tunnel and Speke Airport, at the same time providing assistance in so many different ways and to an extent not yet fully realised in national emergencies, strikes, and two World Wars.

The first few years of the twentieth century find the Chamber gravely concerned about the country's defences. It appointed a delegate to serve on the newly constituted Naval and Military Defence Committee of the London Chamber of Commerce which already had delegates from the Associated Chambers of Commerce and from the Glasgow Chamber. Early in February, 1900, the Liverpool Chamber appointed as its delegate Mr. Charles Lancaster, a merchant of Tower Building.

In Liverpool the bodies most insistent upon improved defences of the port included not only a number of trade associations affiliated to the Chamber but also the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, the Incorporated Law Society of Liverpool, the Society of Chartered Accountants, Liver-

pool branches of the British Empire and Navy leagues, and the American Chamber of Commerce. The Liverpool Chamber of Commerce prepared a requisition, which was signed by all parties concerned, demanding that the Lord Mayor summon a "town's meeting" but after this impressive document had been presented to the Lord Mayor it transpired that any such action might interfere with positive (and presumably top-secret) orders already issued by the Government to the appropriate military and volunteer commanders. The Chamber, however, did not appear to be satisfied until its requisition and all the accompanying data were sent personally to the Prime Minister, who replied through the Secretary of State for War assuring citizens that "adequate protection of the River Mersey . . . is . . . sufficient for securing the safety of the port . . . Lord Lansdowne desires me to express his appreciation of the patriotic spirit shown by the requisitionists."

With the new century, too, came a new interest in education; and although the Chamber's resources at this time were tragically limited in view of the work being done—the total revenue had increased only fourfold in 50 years (£363 to £1,568) yet the volume of work undertaken had been multiplied by 25 to 30 times—there was no hesitation in strongly recommending advanced day classes to augment the existing but limited night school tuition at University College. Although unable to provide any financial assistance, the Chamber proposed a two-year course for youths of about 16 years of age so that they might acquire a knowledge of general commercial practice and of the higher branches in commercial education "which at present can only be slowly obtained in merchants' offices or in hours of relaxation from business." The principal subjects favoured by the Chamber were arithmetic, geography, history, law, modern languages, and correspondence. Then, as now, the public spirited citizens were not slow to provide the means whereby such a meritorious scheme could be carried out; amongst those whose names appeared in the first lists of subscriptions, guarantee-

ing annual sums from £10 to £50 were Mr. T. H. Ismay, Elder Dempster & Company, Ralli Bros., Mr. E. K. Muspratt, Alfred Booth & Company, Mr. John Holt, and many other names still occupying an honoured place in the civic life of Merseyside.

At times the Chamber could express its own views and hold fast to its own convictions, as for example when quite positively declining the Town Clerk's request for the continuance of vaccination stations (under section 7 of the Vaccination Act) and again when opposing the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposal that a stamp duty of one shilling be imposed on contract notes delivered by "brokers in the produce exchanges," following the then normal practice on Stock Exchange transactions. In both instances the Chamber won its case, although in the latter a measure of combined action probably swayed the Chancellor's decision to withdraw his proposal.

The wide scope of the Chamber's activities in 1900 may be judged by the careful investigation made into a proposal for the construction of a mono-rail connecting Liverpool with Manchester, the purpose being to provide an express service between the two towns. The investigating committee pronounced that there were no engineering difficulties whatever, and that "an improved communication between Liverpool and Manchester, on the lines suggested, would be of public advantage."

Perhaps the Chamber's most progressive step at the beginning of the twentieth century, however, took the form of more active liaison with other bodies having similar aims and objects; on 31st January, 1900, the Chamber decided to join the Association of Chambers of Commerce, and wasted no time in making its influence felt, taking a prominent place in the spring meeting that year and adding considerably to the value of a vital resolution affecting telegraphic communication between this country and India and the British colonies and dependencies. The additional clause stipulated that there must be effective control, before granting subsidies, especially in points such

as scale of charges, cable maintenance, and acceleration of delivery as greater technical developments began to take effect.

As an indication of the difficulties—it might almost be said “ignorance of local conditions”—facing the shippers of fifty years ago, there is on record the request of an exporter: “Can a map be furnished showing the area of the Gold Coast Colony?” Even Government legislation lacked clarity in certain cases, as evidenced by the query of another exporter: “Does this new ordinance apply to the colony only, or to the protectorate in addition to the colony?”

The year 1902 witnessed the affiliation of six new associations namely :—Liverpool Jute Goods Association, Liverpool Cartowners' Association, Liverpool Shipping and Forwarding Agents' Association, City of Liverpool and District Butchers' Association, Liverpool and District Society of Incorporated Accountants and the Liverpool Society of Chartered Accountants.

In keeping with its growing prestige the Chamber obtained further office accommodation, introduced electric lighting, and added a new boardroom appropriately equipped and furnished. This accounted to some extent for an increase in the Chamber's general expenses for 1902, although other contributing factors included part of the cost of a complimentary banquet to the president on the occasion of his knighthood and the salary of increased staff. On the other hand a saving in printing resulted from having certain documents typed by the office staff, these previously having been reproduced by a firm of outside contractors. At this time too, the council decided that, as the Chamber's memorandum and articles of association had not been revised since 1881, the Commercial Law Committee should be asked to examine and report as to the need for revision. This committee reported as follows:—

“The memorandum does not appear to require any amendment; it seems wide enough to embrace all the

objects for the promotion of which the Chamber exists, and a comparison of it with the much more recent memoranda of the London Chamber (1898) and Manchester (1901) confirms this view."

As for the articles of association, however, the committee recommended that, in cases where the members in general meeting resolved to make alterations and amendments, it would be better to adopt a new set of regulations altogether and the committee suggested that with the council's approval a new set of articles should be submitted to the Chamber.

Accordingly the chairman of the Commercial Law Committee was asked to draft a new set of articles; this was drawn up in conjunction with Mr. Stuart Deacon, and after a number of comments and amendments as the result of further consideration by various trade sections, two extraordinary general meetings were held in 1903 and the following resolution passed unanimously:—

"That the present articles of association be, and they are hereby repealed, cancelled and revoked; and that the revised articles contained in the printed document submitted to the meeting and there amended, and for the purpose of identification signed by the chairman thereof, be and they are hereby approved; and that such revised articles as amended be and they are hereby adopted by the association to the exclusion of all existing regulations thereof."

The revised articles signed by the president, the chairman of the Commercial Law Committee and the secretary were forwarded to the Register General of Companies, by whom they were registered on 27th October, 1903.

In view of a meeting of the Association of Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom which was to be held in March, 1903, the Liverpool Chamber transmitted a series of resolutions for consideration; those dealt with:— (1) Facilities for trade with Southern China; (2) tare limit on motor wagons; (3) Marine Insurance Bill; (4) trustees' investment powers; (5) administration of the territories of

the Congo; (6) railway fares—England; (7) Ministry of Commerce; (8) telegraphic communication with the continent; and (9) British trade with Cuba. This meeting of the Association of Chambers of Commerce was attended by the senior vice-president, the junior vice-president, the chairman of the Commercial Law Committee, the vice-chairman of the African Trade section and the secretary.

Always in the forefront of any movement to augment Empire unity, the Chamber advocated reduced fares for United Kingdom delegates attending the Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, at Montreal, Canada, in August, 1903. No fewer than nine delegates of the Chamber attended this conference, amongst the resolutions being an important one dealing with commercial education, namely :—

“ That this congress is of opinion that the utmost effort should be made throughout the Empire to encourage and furnish facilities for commercial education as a branch of technical and scientific study, and that the home and colonial governments should be asked to give special grants in aid thereof; and, further, the congress is of opinion that chambers of commerce should be represented on boards of education in order to advance the interests of commercial education.”

This resolution was moved by Mr. C. Lancaster on behalf of the Chamber and seconded by a representative of the Vancouver Board of Trade and carried by a large majority.

The Chamber's delegates' original resolution about fast steamship services, having been strengthened after discussion with the Montreal Board of Trade, the Halifax Board of Trade, and the Manufacturing Board, was carried unanimously. This resolution read as follows:—

“ That this congress considers it of the utmost importance in the interests of the Empire that the United Kingdom and her colonies should adopt a policy under which lines of steamships will be secured and retained for (1) the provision of fast mail services on several

routes; and (2) the development and control of trade between the Mother Country and her possessions and between the colonies themselves."

The delegates' report ended on a happy and indeed a friendly note of appreciation:—

"Your council desire to take this opportunity of thanking their Canadian friends for the magnificent hospitality shown to the delegates, both at the congress and during the subsequent tours through Canada, which were arranged for the entertainment of the delegates."

At this time it would appear, according to a letter sent to the secretary of the Chamber by Mr. Charles Lancaster, that Scotland enjoyed lower railway fares than those ruling in England, particularly in so far as weekend and return fares were concerned. Mr. Lancaster quoted as an example the fare from Liverpool to Aberdeen, a distance of 360 miles, being lower than the fare from Liverpool to London, a mere 198 miles. It may be suggested, however, that the railway company had a shrewd idea of the relative attractions of Aberdeen and London to people resident in Liverpool. In any case, why should a Liverpool merchant waste his time in flint-hearted Aberdeen when he could sell his wares much more easily and in far less time to the Londoner?

Following the Chamber's practical assistance in providing class rooms for foreign language teaching by the Liverpool School of Commerce, continuance of the new class rooms in "K" block of Exchange Buildings became possible through the generosity of Sir Alfred L. Jones, K.C.M.G. (president of the Chamber), Mr. P. E. J. Hemelryk, J.P. (one of the vice-presidents) and other generous-hearted members. Continuing its interest in and practical support of all educational developments, the Chamber joined with other bodies in petitioning his Majesty to grant a charter for the disassociation of University College from the Victoria University, Manchester, and establishing a university for Liverpool. Points from the petition, indicating something of the close association between Chamber and university—

an association that has become more and more intimate with the passing of the years—are as follows:—

“The first direct cooperation between this Chamber and University College, Liverpool, took place in 1885 when a special meeting of the Chamber on 8th November approved of measures to improve commercial education as proposed by Liverpool University College. Subsequently several conferences were held and in 1894 the court of governors of University College enacted that from that time onwards the president of the Chamber should be *ex officio* a governor of the college.

“Ties between University College and the Chamber afterwards became closer as the result of continuous co-operation in the cause of commercial education; in 1897 a joint committee was formed consisting of representatives of the Chamber, the City Council and University College; under the management of this joint committee there were formed and held at University College certain commercial education classes in the evening and subsequently day classes were instituted, while branch classes for modern languages developed later in the business centre of Liverpool.

“The petitioners represent the largest interests of the commerce and shipping of this port. The imports and exports at Liverpool in 1900 amounted to £227,000,000, i.e., more than one-fourth of the combined imports and exports of the United Kingdom. . . . The foreign and colonial trade of the port is carried on with every country in the world and especially with the great nations of both hemispheres, their colonies and dependencies. A knowledge of modern languages is, therefore, a first necessity of many of those engaged in trade at the port, or who are sent abroad to represent the great shipping and commercial houses of the United Kingdom. And, consequently, there are needed in this city the greatest possible facilities for the thorough teaching of the languages of the west and east. Moreover, there is also necessary a more general and complete

knowledge of economics, currency, exchanges, banking and commercial and international law than is at present obtainable in local educational institutions. A Liverpool University should help to supply such wants.

“Liverpool is also a great and growing industrial centre. In constructive works and maintenance of the port there is employment for educated men of the very best type. Shipbuilding, marine and electrical engineering, chemical manufacturing, silk, salt, soap and other industries and manufactures form only part of the activities which flourish in and around the city; the most advanced science is required for the carrying on and developing of all these undertakings, especially in view of the active and growing competition of the United States, Canada, Germany, France and the East, where first-class educational establishments (technical and otherwise) are being founded yearly, or the existing organisations greatly extended. Liverpool in its home, colonial and foreign relations, has many other special needs in the way of educational facilities, not here enumerated, which require judicious fostering. Here might be stressed the high importance of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine which has its home in University College and constitutes a unique scientific and hygienic educational institution.

“Commerce and industry being shown to be indispensable to the present and future prosperity of Liverpool, a faculty of commerce is required in a Liverpool University; the granting of the charter would doubtless conduce to this end.

“The population of Liverpool, Bootle, Birkenhead and the adjacent townships and districts amounts to much over 1,000,000 souls. The petitioners believe that a Liverpool University would be well supported by this population and would prove a boon to those who cannot afford to enter the more expensive and older universities.

“The Chamber has in the past assisted largely in the building and equipment of University College. Many

more of its members now offer to contribute large sums for the endowment of a university and for other university purposes."

Following the terms of this petition were the names of 24 associations represented in the Chamber at that date—June, 1902. The case for the charter was heard by the Privy Council in December, 1902 and in February, 1903, the charter was granted, subject to the fulfilment of certain conditions.

In consequence of a rumour that Bidston Observatory was to be abolished, the council of the Chamber despatched a strongly-phrased protest emphasising how important it was that a seaport such as Liverpool should be provided with a fully equipped observatory, and urging the Chamber to protest against the closure of Bidston. The council held a special meeting to consider the matter at which officers of the Liverpool Astronomical Society were present. Ultimately, however, it was decided to postpone consideration of the question until the intentions of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board should be ascertained.

The commercial associations of Liverpool and Liverpool banks were asked if they would participate in a conference to be organised by the Chamber to consider whether or not a system of certified cheques could be introduced. This proposal was made by certain members of the Chamber because of the wide use to which certified cheques were put in Canada and the United States. Many of the associations agreed to participate in the conference. The manager of the Bank of Liverpool suggested that the chairman of the Liverpool Clearing Banks should be consulted. He replied by requesting the conference to prepare definite proposals for his consideration. After receiving replies from the Montreal Board of Trade and the New York Chamber of Commerce, and considering the whole matter in view of its anticipated effect upon counting-house procedure, it was unanimously resolved to take no further action in the matter.

Absence of telephonic communication between Liverpool

and the continent, which had aroused adverse comment on previous occasions, came into prominence again with a rumour that conversations had taken place by telephone between Warrington and Belgium and between Manchester and Belgium. The Postmaster-General, however, stated that at no time had any telephone service existed between Lancashire and the continent. He added that arrangements had been made for a service between Britain and France and that the agreement now only awaited legislative sanction in the latter country; that as "soon as sanction was given, communication by means of the Post Office system would be available between Liverpool on the one hand, and Calais, Orleans and Paris and the more important suburbs on the other; and between Manchester on the one hand and Calais, Dieppe, Orleans, Paris and Rouen on the other." Furthermore, the Postmaster-General intimated that telephonic communication between Liverpool and other towns on the continent had proved impracticable after an exhaustive series of experiments owing to limitations imposed by electrical conditions. By April, 1904, Liverpool was in direct telephonic communication with Paris and the other towns already mentioned at a cost of 8/- for a three-minute call.

The inland telephone services and charges aroused much indignant protest about this time. Comparative rates for services in the towns of Portsmouth, Glasgow and Liverpool proved the national company's services cost the commercial community much less in Portsmouth and Glasgow as compared with the same service in Liverpool; representations to the Postmaster-General produced evidence to the effect that the £5 5s. rate, if successful after a trial period of six months, might be extended to Liverpool. Delay in trunk line services, brought to the Chamber's notice by the Cotton Association and confirmed by several of the commercial associations affiliated to the council, formed the subject of a letter to the Postmaster-General, at that time Sir Austen Chamberlain, who replied as follows:—

"Dear Sir—I am glad to say that the trunk telephone

service between Liverpool and the manufacturing districts of Lancashire and Yorkshire, about which you wrote to me on the 13th inst., will be greatly improved in the near future by the opening of additional circuits between Liverpool and Wigan, Accrington, Bolton, Burnley, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, St. Helens and Huddersfield. The completion of the whole of these circuits depends on that of a new underground line between Liverpool and St. Helens. This, I hope, will be finished early next month.

“ Besides the above circuits, five additional circuits are being provided between Liverpool and Manchester. These will be carried by means of a new underground cable through Warrington which is being pushed forward as rapidly as possible, but I fear some little time must elapse before the circuits can be brought into use . . . I am sorry to learn that the traffic between Liverpool and Manchester has been interfered with to some extent recently by somewhat numerous interruptions of the wires. Special enquiry has been made on this point, and I hope that it will be possible to improve the working. I should add that steps are about to be taken for the provision of many other wires between Liverpool and the districts referred to.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) Austen Chamberlain.”

The above letter has been quoted almost in full as an example of how a Minister of the Crown could infuse into his letters something of the spirit which animated, if it did not inspire, public men in those spacious days at the beginning of a century doomed to witness not only two World Wars, but also the disappearance of so many charming courtesies in public life.

From the domestic angle, however, there occurred in 1902 an event of historic importance—the publication of the Incorporated Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool *Monthly Magazine*. The introduction referred to the difficulty of keeping members of the Chamber adequately

informed about the many activities of the Chamber, these activities increasing every year. The purpose of the new *Monthly Magazine* was intended to keep a record of the various proceedings of the Chamber and its committees, sections and council and also all general and other meetings. The editor stated that the magazine was not intended to interfere with news of the Chamber which appeared from time to time in the Press, and early in the article an opportunity was taken to thank the Liverpool Press for much valuable assistance during the previous fifty years. The magazine was intended to deal with questions of commercial importance and to publish extracts from the chief Government publications and from official records. It was intended to publish articles on commercial and financial matters generally, to record changes in the personnel of the various governing bodies of the Chamber, to extend the influence of the Chamber, to work in unison with all interests in the city for the advancement of the common good. The first article in this new publication gave a concise and at times condensed account of the objects and uses of the Chamber and concluded with the following statement which is just as applicable to conditions in 1950 as in 1902:—

“Liverpool and Liverpool merchants must consolidate their forces and continue to foster the spirit of commercial energy and enterprise which has distinguished them in the past.”

Under the heading “General Notes” there was a large variety of subjects such as forthcoming functions, proposed visit of the colonial Premiers, pleasure cruise to Norway, additional offices for the Chamber, the library of the Chamber, enquiry department, and certificates of origin. A summary was given of business transacted at the monthly meeting of the council held on 24th June, the items including: proclamation of peace at the end of the South African War, a full report on the petition for a charter for Liverpool University, Minister of Commerce, preferential trade within the Empire, duty on grain, Merchant Shipping

(Lighthouses) Bill, mails for the continent: Liverpool and London train service, London-Paris train service, dues on salt, milk-blended butter, consular invoices, imperial cable communication, and code telegrams to Turkey. Correspondence with the secretary of the Association of Chambers of Commerce shows how closely this association worked with the Liverpool Chamber in matters of mutual interest.

The first issue of the magazine reported a meeting of the committee formed on the initiative of the Oldham Chamber of Commerce to consider the question of the growth of cotton within the British Empire. The meeting passed a number of resolutions indicating its unanimous opinion that as the continued prosperity of the British cotton industry depended on an increased supply of cotton an association should be formed to be called the British Cotton Growing Association. The principle object of this association was to be the extension of the growth and cultivation of cotton in British colonies, dependencies and protectorates. The meeting approved of a guarantee fund of £50,000 to be raised during the ensuing five years, and that an executive committee should be formed immediately to collect all available information on the subject and to despatch an expedition of specialists to report on the possibilities of attaining the association's goal. The executive committee was to have power, (a) to acquire land on which to make experiments and to establish plantations, (b) to distribute seed amongst the natives and to encourage them to grow cotton on their own land, (c) to establish stations to buy and sell cotton or any of its by-products, and, (d) to adopt any other means to attain the object in view. Sir Alfred Jones, K.C.M.G., and Messrs. John Holt, J. R. Callender, D. L. Wright, and Thomas H. Barker represented the Liverpool Chamber on the cotton growing committee.

No less than three pages of the magazine were devoted to the African trade and two pages to the West India section, while it required more than a column to list new members of the Chamber and almost a page to detail the

publications, miscellaneous magazines and papers and Foreign Office reports, as well as new tariffs, received during the month and placed in the library for consultation by members. The final page gave a list of the office-bearers and nominated members with the full names and addresses of the president, vice-presidents, treasurer, nineteen elected council members and thirty nominated members representing twenty-four affiliated associations and trade sections.

The second issue of the magazine gave details of Cabinet reconstruction following the retirement of Lord Salisbury, who had enjoyed a long and valuable association with Liverpool, especially during his appointment as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The hope was expressed that in making a new appointment the Government "will act on business principles and that the new Chancellor of the Exchequer will be appointed on account of special fitness for the work, and not as a reward for services, however meritorious in other directions." In passing, this advice might well be passed on to any Government responsible for the appointment of a Chancellor of the Exchequer during the crucial year of 1950.

The August issue carried for the first time a classified list of trades for the use of merchants and traders, a feature which is continued to the present day. The following month, the magazine published a highly informative article dealing with the carrying trade of the United Kingdom, and another on the Cental: Proposed New Weights. The latter gave details of the memorial which was laid before the President of the Board of Trade petitioning that as the cental (100 lbs.) had been introduced into the corn market in 1859, and that its use had been made legal by an Order-in-Council during the same year, the memorialists requested that a new series of weights be authorised, namely 50 lbs., 20 lbs., 10 lbs. and 5 lbs., by the customary order-in-council. Although the President of the Board of Trade regarded this suggestion as "not feasible" at present, the Chamber urged that it be

kept in mind; the Cotton Association sent a letter of thanks to the Chamber for the latter's valuable co-operation. A leading article on the subject, published in the Chamber's *Monthly Magazine* pours ridicule on an alternative outlined by the Board of Trade which suggested preparing nests of standard weights to make up the required amounts. The article emphasised that it was ridiculous to be permitted to lift in one movement a neat structure composed of separate weights, say of seven, two and one pounds and yet forbid the merchant to use the same weight if it should consist of a single piece of metal. "If other trades in Liverpool were to follow the lead given by the Cotton Association and the Corn Association a very important step would be made towards the adoption of the metric system, the results of which would be far-reaching."

A powerful editorial appeared in the November magazine entitled "A Defence of the British Consul." After emphasising that certain commercial journals had been comparing the British consular system with the systems of our trade rivals, the editor defended the British consul, indicating that the great drawback was the apathy of the British merchant. Not one per cent. of the merchants in England read consular reports, the article stated, and in many cases the voice of the consul was crying in the wilderness year after year giving the same advice and reiterating the same warnings, unheeded. Flaws in the consular system were admitted but the editor urged British merchants to regard the British consul abroad in the same way as that in which the American merchant looked upon the American consul.

In 1905, the Liverpool branch of the Commercial Travellers' Association became affiliated. In that same year, too, the council received an invitation to be represented on a committee to advise the Board of Trade, this committee being a re-constitution of the commercial intelligence committee; soon afterwards the Board of Trade published a list of the newly appointed committee, and although the members were selected "on the grounds of commercial knowledge and experience," and although

there were representatives from Manchester, Sheffield, Bradford, Cardiff, Scotland, Belfast and North Yorkshire, there was no representative either direct or indirect from Liverpool. A memorial was prepared and forwarded to the Board of Trade, but no satisfactory reply appears to have been received.

The Salt Chamber of Commerce sent a memorandum to the council protesting against the excessive dues levied on the cost of salt f.o.b., these being proportionately very much higher than the amount levied upon coal.

In 1907 the council indicated that the Commercial Intelligence Department of the Board of Trade had been forwarding a large and rapidly increasing number of communications about advertisements of foreign Governments, corporations and companies, for tenders for the supply of machinery, materials and goods of many different kinds which were open to contractors and manufacturers in Britain. Some of these communications were for publication, others had to be regarded as strictly confidential in their character. During the year 1906 some 800 of these communications were received and dealt with promptly, widely and impartially. Intimation had been sent on many occasions to members and to non-members of the Chamber. The notifications were multiplied at least six times, giving a total of over 4,500 communications made by the Chamber to those most likely to be interested irrespective of whether or not they supported the Chamber in its work. This clerical work involved the Chamber in considerable expense but those who benefited expressed their appreciation.

On those occasions when the Chamber indulged in social events, the proceedings manifested all the dignity and sincerity which one would expect from a body having Sir Alfred Jones as its president. One of the most successful functions of the period must have been that held on 30th April, 1906 when the president entertained Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Barker to luncheon and afterwards presented Mr. Barker with a portrait of himself in oils from

the brush of one of the most distinguished portrait painters of the day, Mr. F. T. Copnall, to mark the occasion of the completion of 25 years of service as secretary of the Chamber.

The following year the council unanimously decided to offer to King Edward VII, in the name of the president and themselves, a portrait of his Majesty in the Robes of the Garter to be painted by Mr. Tennyson-Cole. This gift was graciously accepted by King Edward who received a deputation at Buckingham Palace on 21st February, 1908, consisting of Sir Alfred Jones as president, supported by the vice-president, ex-president and the secretary. In the address which was presented with the portrait the following passage occurred:

“Commerce and industry are mainstays of the British Empire, and peace between the nations is essential to the increase and development of trade. Believing that your Majesty's influence has promoted peace in the world and tended to maintain friendly relations between the British colonies and the Mother Country the Council of the Chamber have, in grateful recognition of such influences, tendered your Majesty this picture.”

The Chamber frequently arranged to have addresses from outstanding personalities during the year and 1907 proved to be remarkable in this respect in that addresses were given on “Cotton Growing and Pastoral Industries in Western Australia” by Mr. Frederick Brockman, chief inspecting surveyor of the Western Australian Government; on “Australia of Today” by Mr. C. H. Hayes, secretary of the Royal Exchange, Sydney; on “Russian Trade Relations and University Study,” by Mr. (now Sir) Bernard Pares, reader in Modern Russian History at Liverpool University; on “Telegraphy through Space and some of its Commercial Aspects,” by Mr. Marconi.

At a special meeting of the council on 15th December, 1909, the deepest regret was recorded at the death of the president, Sir Alfred Jones, two days previously, and

a resolution of condolence was passed. Sir Alfred first became actively connected with the Chamber in 1884 and formed an original member of the African trade section, of which he became vice-chairman and then latterly chairman. After resigning this chairmanship he continued to serve on the committee and was elected a member of the council in 1894, later becoming vice-chairman and then being elected president of the Chamber in 1900, so that at his death he had occupied this high and important office for almost ten consecutive years. Looking back to those ten years, and further, to the early difficulties and disappointments as well as the triumphs of the African section, one cannot but admire the wisdom and pertinacity with which Sir Alfred carried out his onerous duties. It seems quite clear that of all the remarkably unselfish men who devoted their time to the affairs of the Chamber, Sir Alfred stands out as one of the most inspiring. On 22nd March, 1910, it was suggested that a public meeting be called to elect a committee to organise a memorial to Sir Alfred Jones, the Town Clerk consenting to be honorary secretary to the committee and the Lord Mayor proposing that all the clerical work in connection with the memorial be done through the Chamber. Two months later, at a public meeting in the Town Hall a large and influential audience unanimously passed a resolution in favour of the memorial and before the year ended a sum of almost £3,000 had been subscribed.

Several firms engaged in the tea trade in Liverpool sent a requisition to the Chamber asking that the latter should consent to form a tea trade section in order to encourage the tea trade at the port of Liverpool and in due course a preliminary meeting was arranged to investigate the scope and advisability of such a section.

The Labour Exchange organisation made its first approach to employers in Liverpool via the Chamber in February, 1910. The divisional officer, Mr. O. L. Owen, wrote to the secretary calling attention to the Labour Exchange established by the Board of Trade under the

Labour Exchanges Act 1909, and asking members of the Chamber to "give notice to the manager of the exchange of any workpeople that you may be requiring from time to time." The letter outlined the scope for exchanges of this character and expressed conviction that they would confer substantial benefits upon the employer. This applied particularly to Liverpool owing to the constant stream of men passing through the port. The council invited representatives from the Labour Exchange to attend a meeting so that these representatives might explain in more detail the objects of the exchanges and also to enable the representatives to make a personal appeal to employers asking for their co-operation. Subsequently the central office of the Labour Exchanges in London intimated that the Board of Trade intended to establish an advisory committee for the Liverpool district and invited the council to suggest equal numbers of persons representing employers and employees to serve. In due course the council appointed representatives from the steamship owners, the corn trade, the provision trade, and shipbuilding.

At this time came Mr. Stuart Deacon's appointment as Stipendiary Magistrate for the city. Mr. Deacon had given most valuable service as chairman of the council of the Chamber, and the council passed unanimously a resolution offering congratulations on this new appointment. Thus there began a long and intimate association between Mr. Deacon and the Magistrates' court which brought renown to Liverpool and added lustre to the office of Stipendiary Magistrate.

At almost every meeting of the council there were complaints, suggestions about improved service, proposals to improve the recording system, and many other points, including the future administration, connected with the telephone service. Several of those items arose during 1911 when the annual meeting decided to invite the Postmaster of Liverpool to address members on the telephone service. The council's attitude towards the

telephone service may be summed up in points from a statement made by Mr. Charles Lancaster; there had been a marked restriction of development during the last few years; the annual capital expenditure had fallen year by year; the Treasury attitude towards the Post Office had been unsympathetic; the United Kingdom had one telephone for every sixty inhabitants, while the United States had one telephone for every ten; that a proposal should be made at the coming meeting of the Association of Chambers of Commerce to create a public authority on the lines of the Port of London Authority but controlled by the State.

The Chamber had been successful in bringing about many improvements in the past. For instance, in 1885, when the annual subscription for the telephone in Liverpool was £20, the Chamber, supported by other organisations, brought influence to bear which resulted in a reduction to £10 per annum. Again in 1899, the Chamber strongly opposed the Telephone Bill introduced into Parliament on the ground that it would establish a multiplicity of systems, and recommended a single central authority. This resulted in the chief supporter of the bill admitting that a single telephone system was the better. The Chamber also opposed the municipalisation of telephones. Two years later the number of lines available for trunk calls was greatly increased. In 1907 a majority in the Chamber expressed approval "of the measured rate" as being fair in principle, provided that the scale of rates could be adjusted from time to time.

In 1911 the Liverpool Cotton Association Ltd., requested the council to support resolutions passed by the Cotton Association on the subject of the transfer of telephones to the General Post Office. This led to a considerable amount of correspondence and in the end the matter was taken up by the London Chamber of Commerce and other bodies.

The council protested against the passing of the National Insurance Bill and accepted a resolution which was duly forwarded to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the

Exchequer, the President of the Board of Trade and Members of Parliament for Liverpool and district. This resolution indicated that the Chamber was in full sympathy with other chambers of the country upon the firms which the new taxation would hit with excessive inequality. So lengthy and complicated a measure must not be hurried through Parliament without adequate time and opportunity being given to employers to consider the effects of the bill and it was requested that on this account the bill should not be passed during the present session.

The Chamber received a communication from C. Tinling & Co. Ltd., asking that a town's meeting be called to appoint an industrial commission to enquire into how best industrial enterprise in Liverpool could be encouraged, particularly by offering cheaper water, cheaper electric power, and cheaper sites.

The question of improved bills of lading having been discussed at length for some time, a special sub-committee was appointed to draw up a memorandum for submission to the Attorney-General, Sir John Simon. Originally the Chamber had invited Sir John to address the members on this subject but ultimately it transpired that heavy official engagements prevented him coming to Liverpool and consequently he invited the Chamber to submit any statement which they might care to draw up on the subject. This statement and the accompanying letter occupied no fewer than fifteen pages of the sixty-fourth annual report.

On the occasion of the visit of their Majesties to Liverpool on 11th July, 1913, the Chamber presented a loyal address, the deputation presenting the address consisting of the president, the chairman and vice-chairman of the council and other officials. In dignified language the Chamber expressed its happy recollection of the King's last visit (then as Prince of Wales) and emphasised how the total trade of the Port of Liverpool gave convincing proof of the advancing prosperity of the city and port, and constituted an eloquent and convincing proof of the strength and growth of the inexhaustible resources of his Majesty's



Reception and ball at Liverpool Town Hall on 3rd February, 1950



Centenary dinner at the Adelphi Hotel on 4th February, 1950

Empire. The King replied to the effect that it was impossible to over-rate the part played by Liverpool both in distributing to the world the manufactures of this country and in receiving from abroad the raw materials of industry and the food supply of the British people.

So the activities of the Chamber manifested themselves through almost innumerable channels from day to day, touching every aspect of life, commercial, industrial, professional, official, and private, extending far beyond the range of Merseyside, even to every port and every country in the world. This energising, business-creating, Empire-building stream flowed swiftly and in continually increasing volume, carrying ships laden with the fruits of peaceful industry and national prosperity to millions of people living far beyond the Western Approaches. Yet dark clouds hovered on the horizon and soon the ships of peace were to pass into Government control while destinations, cargoes and even the ships' silhouettes were all to change as the nation girded itself in the fight for the freedom of the seas.

At its sixty-fourth annual general meeting on Friday, 12th June, 1914, the Chamber dealt with many highly important matters, including the adoption of a report from the committee for improved transport facilities in Liverpool and an appeal from Lord Shaw asking for assistance in raising a fund to celebrate the 100th anniversary of peace amongst English speaking nations; it dealt with the "Year Book" for Liverpool, the increasing burden of armaments, riots in Shanghai and quay expenses at the port of Hamburg. Nowhere in the proceedings does there appear even a veiled suggestion or the shadow of a prophecy about the commercial disintegration and re-orientation which were to follow war's outbreak a few weeks later. In June, 1914, all the trade sections—iron and general metal, East India and China, Africa, tobacco, cotton, Russia, animal and meat, West India and canned goods—functioned with their accustomed energy and efficiency while the council, the general trade committee and commercial

law committee continued to develop their courageous plans for the prosperity of the Chamber and the progress of Liverpool. But the report of these proceedings, printed and bound obviously after the tragic date in August, appears without the traditional gilt lettering on the binding, foreshadowing the austerity period so prominently a feature of the Second World War.

At its sixty-fifth annual general meeting the Chamber had a report from the council which stated *inter alia*:

"On August 4th, 1914, war was declared, and in consequence the usual routine work of the Chamber has been largely altered. In such a crisis the value of the existence of the organisation offered by a Chamber of Commerce, already in close touch with all Government departments and their leading officials, has been, and is being, amply demonstrated. In the case of the city of Liverpool, the Chamber of Commerce has endeavoured to do its best for the commercial community. The Corporation, the Dock Board, the Customs, the Post Office, the railways and other responsible organisations of the city have each in their own way been of invaluable use in a trying time through which not only this port but the Empire and the world is passing. At the same time the sphere of operations of most of the other organisations is definitely confined to their own peculiar influences. *In the case of the Chamber of Commerce no such limitation exists.* It has powers, and authority, to deal with all matters; and in a time of war is able to perform duties in some respects in a definite manner. The commercial community have realised this, and it is not too much to say that never in the sixty-five years of its existence has the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce been more utilised by the merchants of Liverpool, or more useful . . . Since war broke out each day has been occupied in dealing with some problem. It must be borne in mind that the interests represented in Liverpool are not local but world wide. War does not affect one particular industry or confine itself within

the bounds of a few clearly defined interests in a great world market such as this city represents. Liverpool is one of the principal gateways of England, and consequently a great distributing centre of imports from all countries.

“Owing to its geographical position, Liverpool—in the event of the closing of the east coast ports—would become a natural centre for food distribution in the north; and in view of the already large increase of the traffic of the city, which of late years has become great, it was obvious that immediate steps would have to be taken.

“The Lord Mayor (Mr. Herbert Rathbone) at once approached the council and pointed out that this was a duty which the Chamber should undertake. The council was ready. A committee was appointed for this purpose . . . For many days this committee sat . . . Practically every available medium of transport was examined, and alternative schemes for dealing at once with the vital question of the distribution of food to the population were ready to be used at a moment’s notice . . .

“The question of recruiting, from business firms and sources, came before the council, and under the leadership of their president, the Earl of Derby, the members may rest assured that nothing was neglected to make the response of Liverpool to the nation’s call an unprecedented success. It would be difficult to find any firms on the list of members, who have not readily sacrificed their most useful clerks and employees—to serve their country. In all cases their posts have been kept open for men who have gone to the front, and provision made for their dependents. It has been a source of no little pride to this city to see the magnificent soldierly bearing of those who but a few months ago were civilian clerks.”

The War Office utilised the Chamber as a centre for exhibiting equipment, of which large stores were required. The fact was made as public as possible, and owing to the

instrumentality of the Chamber, many orders were placed in the city which would otherwise have gone elsewhere.

"Probably the most important duty that the Chamber has been called upon to perform has been to advise and guide the commercial community with regard to the multifarious questions and problems affecting the trade of the port and country, that daily arose. In this work the greatest assistance has been rendered by every Government department. In fact, it would be difficult to express the indebtedness of the Chamber to the Government. . . . It may be stated that the Government have constantly approached the Chamber on confidential matters arising out of the war and have been given the information or assistance required.

"Shipping questions became of the utmost importance to the Chamber, as they affected Liverpool to a particular extent. One point immediately arose on the outbreak of war—insurance against war risks"

At this same meeting the following resolution was passed:—

"That this meeting of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and Liverpool Underwriters' Association, while welcoming the Government national war risks insurance scheme, considers that the trading and banking requirements of Liverpool and district make it essential for the working of the scheme that an insurance centre should immediately be established in Liverpool".

The meeting passed further resolutions recording their appreciation of the magnificent response made by the colonies and India to the call of the Empire.

The trade sections of the Chamber swiftly adjusted themselves to war-time conditions and the Chamber's *Monthly Magazine* records innumerable instances of where rapid decisions were made and carried out to the great advantage of the port and indeed of the whole British Empire.

At this period probably the hardest working section was the African trade section whose representatives held frequent meetings on matters affecting the vital territory

of West Africa. Indeed representatives of this section were interviewed by the then Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Lord Islington), as early as 19th August, when advice given by them was gladly accepted by the Colonial Office and undoubtedly influenced the action of the Government during the subsequent few months.

The question of debts owed by the enemy received careful consideration and the results of investigations in this matter were placed at the service of the Treasury. A special meeting of the Chamber on 11th September gave consideration to the moratorium and although divergent views were expressed the Chamber ultimately acquiesced in and approved of the action taken by the authorities. Many trade questions arose and the Chamber frequently found its organisation called upon to deal with questions involving the interests of British personnel and British trade, particularly in so far as German and Austrian transactions were concerned. The Chamber collected information about openings for British goods in other parts of the world, information which proved invaluable to the commercial community. In this connection the *Monthly Magazine* proved highly useful, not only for this purpose but also for attracting new industries to Merseyside. Attention was drawn at this time to the fact that although the coal tar dyes had been discovered in this country yet in 1914 Britain was dependent upon Germany for all of her supplies, particularly of aniline dye. It is gratifying to know that when Britain found herself a quarter of a century later again involved in a world war the Government had no anxiety whatever on this score, the entire industry by that time being safely in British hands.

The sixty-fifth annual report continues:—

“As regards recruiting, the influence of the Chamber proved useful. From all members the response was gratifying. Lord Derby's assistance was of the greatest value to the country. In this connection, i.e., actual personal assistance, it is a matter of satisfaction to note that the merchants of Liverpool have sent to the front one

of the best field hospitals that has gone out. The hospital is most closely associated with the Chamber of Commerce, and may be considered as part of the Chamber's contribution to the needs of the Empire. The chairman is the president of the Chamber . . . The work in connection with its organisation has been very heavy but the junior staff have spared no efforts to make it a success . . . it is not easy for the staff of a Chamber of Commerce to take on at a moment's notice the work of an experienced hospital staff.

"To sum up, when war was declared the problem of finance was the main problem that faced the commercial world, and the council were in the position to render much assistance, owing to the fact that, by their constitution, the advice of competent experts was available . . . The advice of experienced men was placed at the disposal of the Government. This advice has been cordially recognised, and in cases acted upon.

"The Chamber was also called upon to help in the next great problem of the prevention of dislocation of commerce. This was taken in hand, and, it may be said, successfully dealt with. Dislocation of commerce would have been fatal. It has been amply demonstrated that all—from highest to lowest—have been untiring in giving the assistance of their best work which in many cases had to take the place of actual service on the field of battle owing to age limitations; or the urgent demands of carrying on the business of the port and city, and it may be hoped of the country."

From this fine record of achievement in 1914 and 1915 it becomes obvious that in the First World War (as indeed in the Second World War) the Chamber found itself plunged from the very outset into new activities and new responsibilities none of which could be regarded as being fundamentally a matter of ordinary commerce. The plain truth, however, is that had there not been a chamber so constituted as the Liverpool Chamber, or if there had been a chamber without the vision, enterprise and patriotism

so typical of the Liverpool Chamber, or if there had been a chamber which lacked the confidence of the Government, War Cabinet and citizens (which the Liverpool Chamber enjoyed in such large measure) the need would have arisen for a new body, probably some Government department, to undertake all the duties and responsibilities so willingly shouldered and so efficiently executed by the Liverpool Chamber, its council, affiliated bodies, committees and members.

CHAPTER SIX

1914 to 1919

LOOKING BACKWARDS through the mists of the Second World War, which tend to become more dense despite all the efforts of the freedom-loving nations to dissolve them by mutual understanding and co-operation between debtor and creditor countries, the story of the First World War and its effect upon Liverpool may seem colourless and at times almost unreal. Yet a study of those years, 1915 to 1919, and the effects of conditions upon Liverpool trade were not only far-reaching in the ordinary way but extended into the homes of almost every wage-earner and salaried worker as well as to the bush in West Africa and Liverpool's long-established trade with the Far East. Some of the events must be admitted as unique. For instance surely no Chamber of Commerce ever had its president commandeered to serve the Government as Secretary of State for War; yet this was the appointment accepted by the Earl of Derby, to whom the council of the Chamber wrote a letter of congratulation.

Although the work of the Chamber was to undergo such far-reaching changes, yet in 1917 the chairman of the council reported an excellent year's work, and amongst the matters to which he referred in his speech were the Registration of Firms Bill containing an amendment, insisted upon by the Chamber, as to the real names of partners being printed on the firm's letter paper and contracts; this bill became an act the same year. The chairman referred to the re-organisation of the consular service by the Foreign Office and assured the members that, as far as the council had had an opportunity of examining the reorganisation proposals, they seemed likely to be effective. He regretted that the Chamber had not

been successful in obtaining for the benefit of Great Britain and of British trade a Minister of Commerce, or even a permanent Secretary of Commerce, to serve as an effective link between the Foreign Office, the Board of Trade, the Colonial Office, the India Office, and the self-governing Dominions, and the leading business interests of the country. He emphasised that such an officer of state should prevent the clashing of orders given, and regulations made, by different Government authorities.

The Lord Mayor, in addressing the annual meeting in July, 1917, issued a warning about centralisation, from which commercial interests were suffering badly. He declared that there was a very grave danger in the great centralisation of commercial affairs in London and that one of the important duties of a chamber of commerce was to see that local views and ideas which could not be properly known in London were fully reported and brought home to the various officials who at that time were ruling every branch of commerce and industry. In his view it was the duty of Liverpool business men to see that the Chamber of Commerce was kept strong to guard their own interests. One section of the Lord Mayor's speech merits quotation in full, different though the conclusions of today might be:

“The distinction between commerce and industry is one which I think would have to be accentuated in the near future. The Chamber had done excellent work for the manufacturers as well as for the commercial men of Liverpool, but there were phases of the work which no associated chamber of commerce could possibly deal with, and the manufacturers of this country had felt, certainly during the war, that they must have their own association ; I hope they will work cordially with the Chamber of Commerce which looked after the more commercial side. The development side by side was going on in London, and the London Manufacturers' Association had rightly decided that it could work only through the manufacturing districts, and they were decentralising a great deal of their work. A branch of the

Manufacturers' Association had been established in Liverpool and I can assure the Chamber of Commerce that it is not hostile but complementary and supplementary to the excellent work the Chamber of Commerce was already doing . . . I believe that if Britain is going to face reconstruction after the war, and face it successfully commercial and business men must act in cordial co-operation to get the best results."

Later on in the same meeting Mr. G. A. Moore stated that he thought industrial and trade organisations should remember that they were in a different position and had different functions to perform as compared with those of the Chamber. If one did not attempt to usurp the functions of the other then the combination must be for the good of all. The associations must always remember that any statement they might put forward must be of an *ex-parte* character, whereas if they came to the Chamber of Commerce and obtained its unanimous support, no such retort could be raised by any Government department. Referring to associations in London, Mr. Moore had found constantly that attempts were being made to centralise the views of chambers which was a thing that Liverpool would not tolerate for one moment. Liverpool had many times stressed that it was not only able but anxious to speak for itself. The Chamber must not tie itself in any way whatever, nor do anything to prevent it formulating its own views and presenting an unbiased statement based on and supported by the general policy of the council.

On the occasion of the naval battle off Jutland the council of the Chamber sent a telegram to Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, which expressed in appropriate language the feelings of the people of a great port in the midst of what was, at that time, the greatest war in history. The telegram contained this sentence:—

"While deeply mourning the loss of gallant sailors many of whom were from this part of England, the Chamber feels the utmost confidence that the British

Navy will keep the Union Jack supreme in the North Sea till a decisive victory for the allies concludes the war."

On the entry of the United States into the rank of belligerents, the Chamber sent a message to the New York Chamber of Commerce expressing keen satisfaction with the decision of the United States of America, at the call of their President, to range themselves on the side of the allies, in the great cause of freedom. This telegram was signed by Lord Derby as president, and he in due course received a reply in which the president of the New York Chamber reciprocated most heartily, and expressed his firm belief that co-operation in carrying on the war on behalf of the English-speaking peoples and their allies would result in a permanent and lasting peace.

Despite the grave times through which the country was passing, a number of new sections joined the Chamber, amongst them the toy and fancy trades section and the South and Central American trade section; the latter had the co-operation of consuls representing the different republics and that of the Chambers of Commerce of Latin America. It was a time also of receiving important guests, among them being Sir George Foster, Minister of Trade and Finance of Canada who addressed members of the Chamber on the subject of Empire production; Sir George was entertained to luncheon by the Chamber and later on spent two days inspecting the docks and industries of the port. Another highly honoured guest was the Rt. Hon. W. F. Massey, Prime Minister of New Zealand, who addressed the Chamber and was entertained to luncheon in the Town Hall by the Lord Mayor. Two other guests at this time were Sir Paul Vinogradoff, President of the Anglo-Russian Society of Petrograd, and Sir William Clark, both of whom delivered important addresses on Anglo-Russian relations. Sir William H. Clarke, Controller General of the Commercial Intelligence Department of the Board of Trade, paid a special visit to Liverpool to confer with representatives of the executive committee and chairmen of the commercial associations affiliated with the Chamber. A party

of commercial delegates from Serbia paid a visit to Liverpool and were taken on a tour of inspection which included some time spent at the works of the United Alkali Co. Ltd. The company included the president of the Belgrade Chamber of Commerce, the president of the Trade-Guilds of Belgrade, a professor of political economy at the Belgrade University and several bankers, merchants, millers and officials. The delegation felt that the legitimate development of their country had been stultified by the machinations of Germany and Austria-Hungary. They had the impression also that Britain was inadequately informed about business methods in Serbia as so many industrialists in Britain relied on information circulated through German and Austrian channels. It was suggested that Serbian credit was unreliable and the deputation had long felt the need for correcting this impression.

The deputation desired to interest British capitalists in the promising possibilities for investment in Serbia, particularly in harnessing water power, building railways and opening roads into the interior. Serbia also hoped to obtain the use of a port and that a regular service would be maintained by steamship between Britain and Serbia. It was anticipated that a great quantity of agricultural machinery, locomotives, steel rails, textiles and livestock would be required immediately after the war and the Serbian delegation indicated that they looked to Britain for the bulk of their supplies. The delegation, which came to Britain on the invitation of the Board of Trade, paid visits to Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle and other important centres but it appears that the reception accorded by Liverpool touched them deeply, first because of the address of welcome phrased in the French language by Lieut.-Col. H. D. Behrend (one of the vice-presidents of the Liverpool Chamber) and secondly because of the letter received from the president of the Chamber, Lord Derby, in which he paid a very beautiful tribute to Serbia and her gallant role in the war.

Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, Bart., M.P., Director of

the newly-formed Department of Overseas Trade of the Foreign Office and the Board of Trade paid a visit to Liverpool and addressed members on the work of the Department of Overseas Trade. Another important address was given by Mr. J. Victor, representing the Lyons Commercial Fair. Mr. Victor traced the origin of the fair, promised that all British exhibitors would be provided with a passport, and that the French Customs would allow all samples to Lyons to be admitted free of duty; other important facilities were announced in detail indicating in no uncertain fashion the earnest desire of the organisers that British merchants should benefit to the maximum by the fair. It was very obvious that the fair offered unique opportunity to the members of the toy and fancy trades section of the Chamber, and members appeared to welcome all Mr. Victor's suggestions.

Enough has been said to indicate that not only did the Chamber entertain a wide variety of guests, foreign as well as those representing departments of the Government, during those years so crucial for post-war trade but also kept an open mind with regard to entirely new openings for new industries as soon as conditions should become normal. For instance, as early as 1915 the Chamber published a list of sites which might be utilised for new industries in and near Liverpool. Those sites included areas varying from 67 acres in extent to 3,000 sq. yds.; the sites were listed with their respective transport facilities and an indication of the power available, e.g., electricity and gas. The Chamber appointed a committee to formulate a scheme for post-war trade which reported to the Chamber early in 1916. This committee met frequently, and eventually agreed on a series of resolutions dealing with a Ministry of Commerce, the protection and development of industries, reciprocal trading relations and tariffs, navigation laws, shipping and mercantile marine, control of companies, consular services and banking. The resolutions of the Chamber and the result of meetings held with the Association of Chambers of Commerce were duly recorded in the

sixty-sixth annual report; they indicate very clearly the wisdom and foresight shown by the commercial community at a time when the outcome of the war was uncertain in the extreme.

At the annual meeting on 22nd June, 1916, the president, Lord Derby, referred to the recruiting scheme which was initiated the previous year and which had been greatly helped by the Chamber and by Major Parkes, the military representative on the advisory committee. Major Parkes, after addressing the members and the council, formulated the Chamber of Commerce scheme designed to obtain the maximum number of men required for the army, leaving the minimum number necessary to carry on the trade of the port. As a result, the War Office obtained most valuable information about the staff requirements of industry and the number of men who could be released without interfering with the war-time conduct of industry. Lord Derby acknowledged with gratitude the generosity which the members had shown to their employees who had enlisted. In almost every case the employers had supplemented Army pay and made a grant so that not only had the soldier confidence that his home was secure but also that his employer recognised past services. This established a bond of sympathy between employee and employer which everyone was glad to see. Lord Derby continued:

“Another matter of a more or less military character to which the Chamber had contributed was one on the opposite side of the picture to the fighting forces—that was the assistance given by members to the Liverpool Merchants' Mobile Hospital. I have had the privilege of visiting that hospital two or three times in France, and also of talking to those who have visited it officially. There is nothing but praise for the hospital, but the best praise of all was the praise of those who had been treated in the hospital and who appreciated, more perhaps than could be expressed in words, the great part which the merchants of Liverpool had played in creating the hospital, and thus alleviating the sickness

and suffering which unfortunately must always be existing in war."

Lord Derby expressed his great pleasure at the increase in the number of members and stated that he hoped to see them increase to a still greater extent. He assured members that the chambers of commerce in Britain would play a very important part in the reconstruction of commercial life after the war, and he emphasised how necessary it was that all those chambers should be representative of all that was best in the commercial life of the cities and towns in which they were formed. He stated that in his view it was the business of every chamber of commerce and every commercial man, who accepted the proposals of the allied conference in France, to see that such resolutions were put into a more concrete form, and put in such a way that they could take effect the moment war ended. He stressed that members of the Liverpool Chamber should examine carefully all the proposals from every point of view, and that any suggestion as to modification or improvement should be made in such a manner as would (with the added authority of the Chamber), be useful in giving the Government a lead as to the terms on which we should have to proceed.

As might be expected from one who had for so long merited the honorary title "uncrowned King of Lancashire" Lord Derby recommended that, in considering post-war problems, the Chamber should ignore the old political prejudices and re-constitute themselves anew from the commercial point of view. Commercial men had seen things brought to light during the war, by the insidious attacks made on their trade, and he warned them that they must take steps to make it impossible for any enemy to capture trade by war, or by any of the insidious methods to which a potential enemy might resort in peace time. This speech, one of the most constructive ever delivered at an annual meeting, concluded with a tribute to the chairman of council, Mr. H. D. Bateson, who had acted as deputy-president and shouldered some of the duties

which normally fell to the president, and also to the secretary, Mr. A. H. Milne.

Three of the important new organisations initiated by the Chamber during the First World War were the Employment of Disabled Officers in Commercial Houses, the National Motor Volunteers, and the Liverpool Merchants' Mobile Hospital. The first was created to bring employer and employee into contact as soon as the latter obtained discharge from hospital or found himself able to undertake commercial duties. The second organisation corresponded to a similar service in other parts of the country and was, of course, self-supporting. The third organisation was that to which Lord Derby referred in his speech and to which reference is made earlier in this chapter. On the formation of those three organisations is found this comment in the Chamber's *Monthly Magazine* of February, 1917: "The machinery of the Chamber of Commerce and its experience in organising movements which at first sight appear to have but slight connection with purely commercial interests are very valuable for the initiation and expansion of many deserving schemes which require the guidance of skilled business experience."

The Chamber gave much consideration to problems arising in connection with the transit of goods from Britain to Switzerland, Italy and Spain via France, and members were circulated with details about arrangements finally made by the Board of Trade governing the issue of certificates of various kinds required for the transport of goods to Switzerland and to Italy, while goods sent by parcel post to Spain were released from certain formalities. Information was also circulated about the development of trade with Finland and China. Members were warned that travellers employed by German firms still visited Finland, spoke the language of the country, quoted prices in Finnish currency, carried samples of all their wares, and worked methodically to enlist the interest (and usually with success) of every firm, large and small, throughout the territory. In contrast to this, a traveller representing a

British firm was a rarity: when, however, he did appear he knew no Finnish, he quoted prices f.o.b. a United Kingdom port, and in sterling; he contented himself with visiting two or three of the largest towns and in those towns he called upon one or two only of the largest firms. Information was also given about the German policy of appointing agents wherever they found any sale for their goods; and those agents were supplied with stocks of goods for which quarterly payments were made by an arrangement whereby the agent only paid for those goods which he had sold. By these means Germany captured almost the whole market for belting. Another policy adopted by German manufacturers was to underquote any prices quoted by British firms' representatives; and the German firms gave three months' credit, apparently with perfectly satisfactory results to themselves, whereas the British manufacturer demanded cash against orders. This one item is quoted as an example of the really practical service rendered to members by the Chamber during a period when so many large concerns found themselves compelled to seek business in entirely new markets.

In April, 1917, Mr. Thomas H. Barker, secretary of the Chamber for 31 years died at the age of 76. During his long and distinguished service to the Chamber he had amassed a vast amount of information on every conceivable subject affecting business policy—so stated the obituary published in the *Monthly Magazine* of April, 1917. The paragraph continued :—

“The keynote to Mr. Barker's success was his power of application and thorough accuracy . . . his manner was courteous and dignified. His sense of right and wrong was great, and he lived an excellent specimen of an English gentleman of ‘the old school’—to use without irreverence a hackneyed term. The man with whom he particularly worked in closest harmony—and there is no doubt the object of that work was one which appealed to Mr. Barker if possible more than any other branch of the Chamber's work—was the late Sir

Alfred Jones, K.C.M.G., pioneer and apostle of West Africa . . . he was a keen traveller, a great walker, and insatiable reader, and an artist . . . the city of Liverpool, as well as the Chamber of Commerce, have lost in Thomas Barker a good and faithful servant and none missed more keenly than by his own old staff in the Chamber of Commerce."

A practical appeal for mutual understanding between capital and labour after the war was made by Mr. J. Child who emphasised that perhaps the most difficult problem to be faced when war ended was the satisfactory adjustment of relations between capital and labour. He stated:—

"In the midst of the great life and death struggle which has now been waged for three years, there have been evidences of a restlessness on the part of certain sections of labour, and a feeling that industrial upheaval is likely to follow the war."

Having outlined the reasons for arriving at this conclusion—reasons which are just as applicable today as then—Mr. Child went on to exhort all parties to enter upon the business of industrial reconstruction in a spirit of mutual forbearance, urging both sides of industry to be actuated by a genuine desire to work for the interests of everyone concerned. All prejudices and suspicions must be put on one side, and master and man must come together in the same spirit of unity and determination to win that had characterised all classes throughout the war.

Liverpool merchants were provided with information about credits in Western Canada, which had come from an imperial trade correspondent at Toronto; information about agencies in Canada obtained from a Montreal commission agent; about trade conditions in Ontario; about the establishment of a new chamber of commerce at Bathurst and a British Chamber of Commerce established at Pekin. The Chamber also published a highly detailed list of openings for British articles in Italian markets, and on one occasion listed forty-six different buyers in Italy anxious to import from Britain articles as varied as boot

polish and motor-cars, toys and fish oils, galvanised sheets and industrial diamonds, confectionery and gas meters, fur coats and glove buttons.

As metal shortage began to affect the minting of coins and the Government fell back upon paper as a substitute, the Chamber kept members informed as to which countries would have to accept the new form of currency. Probably West Africa, more than elsewhere, found paper money unsatisfactory. The bank cashiers had the unpleasant experience of counting thousands of notes, each representing one shilling or two shillings, which had passed through several hands in native markets and were thus dirty—even dangerous to health. Moreover, the natives did not take kindly to a form of currency which proved ill-suited for carrying in the traditional manner. West African traders, mostly women, were in the habit of placing coins in the hems of their flowing garments. So the disadvantages of paper money became apparent immediately the rainy season started; one day a woman-trader entered the bank and unwrapped from the hem of her garment a few handfuls of rain-sodden paper which, she declared, had been 200 one-shilling notes that morning when she left her hut in the bush, thus presenting the astonished cashier with a problem that required a considerable amount of argument and explanation to solve. The fact is, however, that ever since the bank first opened its doors in West Africa, banking had been a complete mystery to the West Africans: and for many years afterwards the African refused to trust his money to the bank, preferring to bury it in the ground near his hut or keep it in a box stowed below his bed or elsewhere indoors. The Government and the banks did their utmost to discourage such risky measures, usually in vain. On one occasion, however, a native chief was persuaded to open a current account into which he paid £5. In those days the bank charged 20/- per annum commission on such accounts, so that when this chief visited the bank three years later he found that his balance had dropped to £2—an experience which he told and re-told to so many

people that the bank became even more unpopular.

Another bank soon opened branches throughout West Africa, offering to keep current accounts without any charge to the customer. The African welcomed this new facility, and so many of them opened accounts that the new institution became known as "the Black Man's Bank". Although the original bank made an effort to hold its position by granting precisely similar facilities, and even tried to exploit the newcomer's title by describing itself (quite unofficially of course), as "the White Man's Bank", yet the new institution had come to stay; it does a large business today numbering amongst its customers the Government, chiefs and many of the leading business houses, farmers and merchants.

As the war dragged wearily on, month by month, the commercial community displayed more and more concern about the intricate problems which it anticipated in the post-war years. The Chamber fully recognised its responsibility—a responsibility greater than ever before; but it also recognised and indeed emphasised that other chambers throughout the country shared those responsibilities and that all chambers should find infinitely greater scope for their services when war ended. An editorial in the *Monthly Magazine* of January, 1918, puts this very clearly :

"The chambers' usefulness to the commercial community is beyond question, and their services will become increasingly valuable as time goes on. The Government frankly recognises this and has already arranged through the Board of Trade and other departments for closer relations in various ways, such as by advisory committees appointed in consultation with chambers and by a reorganised system for the collection and dissemination of commercial intelligence from abroad, which can be supplied only through the chambers themselves and through certain trade associations. But apart from all this there are innumerable advantages enjoyed by members of chambers. More than ever the individual finds he cannot stand alone, and

co-operation in commerce is at least as indispensable as it is in any department of industry. On the other hand, if the chambers are to speak and act with full authority, they ought to have the support of all responsible firms trading within their area.

"The Liverpool Chamber of Commerce long ago established its position as one of the leading chambers in the country, and it has always had very intimate relations with Government departments, through which the whole community has benefited. Having regard to the critical days that are before us, no commercial house can afford, to put it no higher than on the ground of selfish interest, to stand aloof. The more widespread support the Chamber receives, the more widely will its services be shared. In Lord Derby it has an admirable president, who takes the keenest interest in its work, in spite of his heavy responsibilities as Secretary of State for War; and many of the best-known and most influential business men in Liverpool devote their time and experience to the work of the council and the various sections, without fee or reward. No one can afford to be indifferent to the changes that are imminent in legislation, in international treaties, in all the readjustments that must follow the war, in labour problems, and possibly even in fiscal policy, to all of which questions the Chamber will be called upon to give anxious consideration."

Although the end of the war was eagerly anticipated by the commercial community, the Chamber presented on May 4th 1917 an aeroplane to Newfoundland. The presentation ceremony took place in bright sunshine and was followed by an exhibition of flying in which several machines took part. The Lady Mayoress named the new aircraft *Liverpool* and the gift was accepted by Lord Desborough, president of the Imperial Air Fleet Committee and by Lieut.-Col. W. H. Franklin, D.S.O., representative of the Newfoundland Government. Lord Morris, former Premier of Newfoundland, also graced the

ceremony with his presence. At the conclusion of the ceremony Lieutenant Pendavies, D.S.O., took off in the *Liverpool* for Chester en route for the base in France.

Renewed efforts were made to find employment for discharged ex-service men and the Liverpool Chamber co-operated through the Associated Chambers of Commerce in establishing a bureau in Regent St., London, for the assistance of ex-officers and employers. The Chamber also issued an appeal by Captain T. W. Dawson of the 7th King's (Liverpool) Regiment, for assistance in placing discharged men, qualified in a number of important trades, with suitable employers in the Liverpool area.

The end of the war was foreshadowed very clearly by an editorial in the September issue of the *Monthly Magazine* and a similar article in October referred to "war-weariness" accounting for the lethargy shown at both council and section meetings. It was at this time that the Whitley Committee issued its final report and the Chamber strongly recommended that members should give this important publication their best attention. This was followed by a number of articles which appeared in the magazine dealing with the various recommendations in detail and also giving advice about the organising of an advisory committee in factories and workshops. In the light of events today it is interesting to note that the Chamber's interest in the Whitley report received further stimulus by an address from Mr. Wilfred Hill, a member of the Whitley Committee, entitled "Restriction of Output; the Problem and its Solution."

In the sixty-ninth annual general meeting report there occurred this paragraph:

"The change from war conditions to the transition period has proved exceedingly trying but every effort has been made to establish the new order of things and to prepare for reconstruction generally. The Chamber's services were utilised through the Ministry of Labour for the purpose of selecting pivotal men for early demobilisation. The very difficult question of de-control

was then considered and every effort has been made to bring the trade back as far as possible to pre-war conditions."

It may be recorded here that considerable difficulty arose in connection with those pivotal men, in view of complaints having been received from employers that other men had obtained their complete discharge from the army while the pivotal men had not been released. On the Chamber taking this matter up at the request of members, it was found that the cause was two-fold: first, owing to a great accumulation of work at the War Office and, secondly, because of all available transport being required for men proceeding on leave and for prisoners of war. The War Office arranged for a special night staff to deal with this problem which but for the combined action of chambers might have led to much greater delay in resuming the manufacture of civilian goods by Liverpool firms.

One of the most poignant meetings ever held under the auspices of the Chamber took place in the beginning of January, 1919, when it was decided to dispose of the Liverpool Merchants' Mobile Hospital which had been established and maintained at a total cost of nearly £90,000 and had relieved the sufferings of nearly 20,000 service men in France. Surely this must have been one of the most efficient of all war-time voluntary undertakings, its organising expenses comprising only two per cent. of the amount raised. Authority for disposing of the hospital and its equipment, and the balance on hand, consisting of some £3,200, was given formally at a meeting of the subscribers held at the Town Hall under the presidency of the Lord Mayor. The commandant of the hospital, Lieut.-Col. Nathan Raw, M.P., and members of the medical and nursing staff were cordially and gratefully welcomed on their return. The president of the hospital, Lord Derby, whose ambassadorial duties in Paris prevented his personal attendance, wrote testifying to the high appreciation in which the hospital had been held by the military authorities. The Hon. Arthur Stanley, chairman of the British

Red Cross Society, wrote of the great pride it had been to him as a Liverpool man to be able to point to the hospital as a model of all that a hospital should be. A letter was also read from Sir Arthur Lawley, Commissioner of the Red Cross Society, paying tribute to the signal service rendered by the hospital to the cause of the Society.

It might be fitting to end this phase of the Chamber's experience by quoting a poem written by an employee of a member of the Chamber who, serving in France, finding his demobilisation unduly delayed, appeared to obtain some relief from boredom by a question which to this day has not been answered.

I WONDER ?

" I wonder if, when Armageddon's over
And glorious peace once more will reign,
Munition workers still will be in clover
With feather beds, and strawberries and cream.
I wonder if they'll still be earning weekly
What to a soldier would be annual wealth;
Or if they'll turn to their pre-war jobs meekly,
Without a holiday, even for their health.

" I wonder if the women in the city
Working so hard, so late (poor things!) in banks
And offices, etcetera (what a pity
That they should get such little grudging thanks!)
Will, with a noble patriotic gesture,
Resign their jobs *and* salaries, and then
Be seen once more clad in domestic vesture
Pushing a pram and not a fountain pen.

" I wonder if the host of Whitehall Workers—
S.O.'s, P.M.'s, M.P.'s, and O.B.E.'s
And all those who have been accused as shirkers,
Will be hard at it after years of peace.

For instance, will Victoria be thronging
With multitudes of red-capped F.M.P.'s,
Dreaming of days gone by, the days belonging
To times of passes, 'stead of "seasons please?"

"I wonder whether Germany, defeated,
A bankrupt nation, hated by the world,
And finding that she's been so badly cheated
And into utter desperation hurled,
Will turn and rend her once revered Kaiser,
Will Soldat Schmidt, who comes from Wittenburg,
Or Fritz from Berlin now a little wiser,
Knock bullets 'stead of nails in Hindenburg!

I wonder!"

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE FIRST OFFICIAL HANDBOOK, 1918

IN 1918 there appeared an *Official Handbook of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce (Incorporated) with classified Trade Indices in English, French, Spanish, Italian and Russian; also Trade Mark Section*," published for the Chamber by Bemrose & Sons Ltd., Derby, to which Mr. Alan H. Milne, C.M.G. (secretary to the Chamber 1913-1917, and assistant secretary 1895-1912), contributed the introduction. Mr. Milne also gave a useful description of the Chamber's functions as they were regarded at that date. They read as follows:—

1. To distribute gratis monthly to each subscriber post free a copy of the official journal of the Chamber, containing leading and special articles and general information on business subjects, Government information concerning regulations for exporting, changes in tariffs of overseas countries, records of Chamber's ordinary and special meetings, names of firms abroad who desire to represent British manufacturers and other general useful information.
2. To investigate complaints of subscribers in connection with the railways, steamship companies, and telephone and telegraph departments.
3. To arbitrate when requested in trade disputes, and to convene meetings of special trades and industries for special purposes.
4. To form sections of the Chamber in connection with special interests at home and abroad.
5. To place subscribers in touch with foreign and overseas firms who desire to represent Liverpool firms.
6. To supply information as to trade regulations of foreign countries, and to advise as to methods of opening trade relations.

7. To communicate officially with all Government and other official departments, British and foreign chambers of commerce, commercial attachés and consuls when necessary.

8. To place subscribers in touch with Government departments, agents-general of self-governing Dominions, consuls and foreign Government departments, through the medium of H.M. representatives abroad.

9. To issue certificates of origin for export trade and other special certificates.

10. To issue identification certificates for commercial travellers connected with subscribers' firms.

11. To advise generally on all business matters affecting subscribers' interests.

12. The library—*inter alia* Board of Trade Journals, Government regulations and publications—chambers of commerce publications, commercial works generally, cable and telegraphic codes and trade directories, are at the disposal of members, for use at the offices of the Chamber.

13. Finally, the chief object of the Chamber is to focus and assist all the many trade interests of the port and city.

Mr. Milne's admirable summary concludes:

"The interests of the Chamber of Commerce are identical with the interests of its commercial magnates. In Liverpool a shipowner may be called upon to take the lead in the interest of the merchant—a professional man to guide the steps of the man of commerce—or a statesman to preside. Liverpool has been consistently fortunate in securing such disinterested service since the formation in 1850 of its Chamber of Commerce. The progress the Chamber has made since that date has amply justified the public spirit of the leading public men of the city.

"In this review of the commerce of the city it must not be forgotten that Liverpool is not merely a city given over to the acquisition of money. In religion, art,

science, literature, philanthropy and all the other great interests of human life the city has ever played a prominent part, and has displayed a spirit of high and adventurous endeavour. In the geographical situation, bordering on the hills of Wales, the Peak of Derbyshire, the land of Burns and the Emerald Isle, it is an ideal centre for the tourist. In its streets are to be seen daily men of every colour and race. It has its Chinatown and its genuine Romany colony. The Scot, the Welshman and the Irish mingle with the men of Lancashire. Everything that tends to make a city is to be found there. Its very compactness as compared with the diffuse character of the metropolis is its strength. What Liverpool will become under the altered conditions arising after the war, no one can predict; but it may be safely anticipated that in the future, as in the past, the city of Liverpool will not be found lacking in energy, enterprise and progress, and will contribute its share to the stability of the British Empire."

In an informative article "The City of Liverpool—One of the World's Greatest Shipping and Manufacturing Centres," by Sir William B. Forwood, K.B.E. (President of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, 1871 and 1878-1880), the following paragraphs give a clear idea of how the city appeared to a famous commercial lawyer. He says:

"At the close of the 17th century we notice the first glimmerings of the great commercial future that awaited Liverpool; and this century may be said to mark the beginning of modern Liverpool. Although the population was still very small we find civic pride in the advancing prosperity of the town reflected in the opening of the new Exchange and Town Hall.

"During those early centuries in our history, Liverpool was greatly helped by the public spirit of the Moore family and the noble families of Stanley and Molyneux. The building of the tower in 1406 by Sir John Stanley marks the beginning of the intimate connection of Lord

Derby and his family with Liverpool, which has so happily continued to the present day. The ancient family of 'Liverpool' founded the Chapel of St. Nicholas and four chantries and the Crosse family gave land upon which the first Town Hall was built.

"Up to 1860 Liverpool still suffered from a congested population and the lack of anything like an adequate sanitary system. The streets were narrow and ill-paved, the people were largely housed in cellar dwellings amid squalid surroundings, her death rate was the highest in the kingdom, intemperance was rampant, and she well earned the appellation of 'the black spot on the Mersey'. During the past fifty years her citizens with magnificent determination and energy have cleansed the Augean stable they inherited; streets have been widened and re-made; sewers have been enlarged and reconstructed; thousands of insanitary dwellings have been demolished and model working mens' houses erected in their place; and this work has been so well carried out that, in the housing of the labourer, Liverpool can claim to have set an example to the rest of the country. A new and abundant water supply has been introduced. The city is encircled by public parks and recreation grounds. Public baths and washhouses have been instituted at all convenient centres. Electric trams, operated by the city, link up every suburb by a frequent and rapid service; while the health and comfort of the citizens have been amply cared for. In every aspect of civic life Liverpool may claim to have achieved a remarkable success which reflects great credit upon the city council.

"But while Liverpool has been most zealous in what Disraeli called 'the policy of sewage' she has been equally mindful of the intellectual wants of her people. Her libraries, branch libraries, art gallery, museum and not less her system of elementary education, broadening out into technical and higher education, and expanding again to the university, all abundantly testify to the

enlightened views which have guided the governing classes.

“The adornment of the city has not been neglected. We can point to our many public buildings with pride—the plateau of St. George’s Hall has few equals in its noble expanse, which imparts dignity to this great classic building. Another equally beautiful plaza is to be found at St. George’s Pierhead, which enjoys a lovely vista of the Mersey with its busy shipping and ever-changing lights and shadows, and beyond, the distant range of Claughton and Bidston Hills, while in the foreground we have St. Nicholas Place with its hurrying stream of tramcars and the jostling crowds of ferry passengers and round about us we have our ancient church of St. Nicholas and such majestic piles as the Dock Board and the Cunard offices.

“Nor must we omit from this rapid review mention of the wonderful panorama of Liverpool’s trade and shipping to be obtained by a journey along the Overhead Railway.

“This is the civic view of Liverpool, but it is incomplete without its commercial aspect, for all its importance, all its wealth, is due to its commerce and it is impossible to do full justice to the history of the city without giving an account of its port and its commerce, the two being so intimately connected and intertwined.”

In view of this enlightened attitude so graphically recorded at such an early date, it is not surprising to find that the author took a prominent part in advocating the construction of a roadway under the Mersey; and although he did not live to see the completion of this great project nearly a quarter of a century later, yet the fact that he so clearly realised its urgency in those early years constitutes one more proof of the vision of those progressive civic leaders amongst whom Sir William Forwood stands out as an inspiring example. Another article in the *Official Handbook* describes the Port of Liverpool as it appeared in 1918:

“ The city has been called ‘ The Gateway of England ’ and the description is apt. It is one of the great shipping centres of the world. Ships come and ships go; colonies have their commercial headquarters in the city; foreign trade looks to Liverpool to buy and sell its wares. When its greatness began, England’s vast West Indian colonies were in their zenith. Liverpool geographically was the outlet and inlet of these great Dominions over the seas. India and the Chinese tea trade; the rice trade of Burma; the carrying trade of Singapore; the untouched fields of the mighty east opened up. Then came the great South American republics, Mexico, and all the Central states, and Liverpool again was an outlet and inlet. Then came the advent of West Africa, a practically unknown but a wonderful territory. So Liverpool with its ‘ ships, colonies and commerce,’ to recall an old but not forgotten toast, did its share for England. London, naturally, ultimately became the focus of many of these new elements of England’s greatness, but the share of Liverpool in fostering the import industries, nursing them, and making them, so to speak, able to walk alone cannot and will not be forgotten. So Liverpool thrived and prospered. The shipping of the city became a byword; the fine old steamship owners, and the fine employees they raised, trained and sent over the Seven Seas, have made Liverpool a port to be spoken of with reverence and pride, wherever seafaring men congregate, over all this wide world.

“ The trade of Great Britain has followed the trade of Liverpool. Liverpool has always been, in a manner, the pulse of England’s commerce. This is a review of the city’s trade throughout a period of fifty years. Fifty years is a large part of a man’s life; it is a mere fraction of the life of a city; but these last fifty years have marked an epoch in the life of Liverpool. The progress of the commerce of Liverpool during the 18th and 19th centuries is almost without a parallel. In 1800 the tonnage of ships entering the port was less than 500,000;

in 1880 it reached almost 8,000,000 and in 1913 it was over 18,000,000 tons. In 1800 the number of ships entering the port was 4,746 averaging 94 tons; in 1913 there were almost 25,000 vessels averaging 737 tons. The only British port which can at all come into competition with Liverpool is London, the total trade of which (exports and imports), in 1880 amounted to almost 17,000,000 tons against the 14,500,000 tons of Liverpool . . . the proportion of steamers to sailing vessels had very largely increased. The return for 1881 gives 5,500,000 tons of steamers to just over 2,750,000 tons in sailing ships . . . if we take the value of the imports as a criterion Liverpool stands second to London alone and vastly overtops all the other shipping ports of the United Kingdom.

“As regards her export trade Liverpool stands without a rival in the United Kingdom as the following comparison of the values of exports at the ports named will show: Liverpool, £185,539,801, London, £143,160,009, Glasgow, £31,531,638, Southampton, £31,410,879. The imports into Liverpool comprise products of every description from every region under the sun. Cotton, however, is the great staple, almost the whole of the trade of the commodity centering in Liverpool. Grain comes next, American and Australian corn occupying a large proportion of the market. Of recent years a large trade in American provisions and live cattle has sprung up . . . timber, principally from Canada, forms an important part of the imports, the large stocking yards extending for a considerable distance along the northern docks. At one time tea from China and wool from Australia promised to be important items in Liverpool's imports, but the financial arrangements with London have drawn these trades almost entirely away. In regard to exports, Liverpool possesses decided advantages, lying so near the great manufacturing districts of Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire, and it is the natural channel of transmission for their goods.

The consequence is that many ships after discharging their inward cargoes at London and other ports round the coast proceed to Liverpool in ballast in order to load an outward cargo.

“ Within recent years, however, the shipbuilding industry has been considerably revived, particularly on the Birkenhead side of the Mersey, where there are established large shipbuilding and repairing yards in which vessels of the largest tonnage are built to the order not only of British shipowners, but some of the principal foreign shipowning companies of the world. In the place of the loss of so many fine ships during the submarine warfare there will be an impetus given to Mersey shipbuilding by the demand for new merchant tonnage, and the exceptional facilities provided at the Birkenhead yards will considerably enhance the Mersey as a leading shipbuilding centre.

“ At one period the soap industry filled a large space in the manufactures of Liverpool, but for many years it made little or no progress, until in 1886 the present Lord Leverhulme began the business of soap-making at works in Warrington with only a capacity for turning out 20 tons of soap per week, subsequently removed to Port Sunlight where, in 1912, the soap works had an aggregate capacity of about 4,000 tons per week, a figure since greatly surpassed.

“ The rise of the manufacturing industry of South Lancashire and the opening of the American and West Indian trade gave the first impulse to the progress of Liverpool's trade which has ever since continued. The importation of sugar, principally from the West Indies, led to the establishment of sugar industries which continue to form an important part of the local industry although perhaps not to the same extent as in years past.

“ Liverpool's original small harbour proving insufficient to accommodate the growth in shipping, there resulted a new wet dock closed with flood gates, impounding the water so as to keep the vessels floating

during the recession of the tide. This dock in Liverpool was the first of its kind, the parent of all the magnificent structures which have attracted the admiration of the world stretching both north and south of the city.

"As regards the future and its possibilities—geographically, Liverpool is without a rival and she draws to her, as to a common centre, the traffic of both hemispheres—for it is as a transit port, between countries most distant from each other as well as between the continent and its customers, that she is pre-eminent."

Mr. Milne also provided a welcome sidelight upon some of the personalities and of the personal background responsible for the Chamber's rapid and at times spectacular progress up to 1918. For instance he says:

"From the start the Chamber was particularly fortunate in its sponsors as it enlisted the interest and support of men of the highest integrity—men who were the acknowledged commercial leaders of the city. The names of all its presidents . . . are known, remembered and respected. Amongst the names of the earlier presidents we find .a Horsfall, Hornby, Shand, Bouch, Heath, Holland, Torr, Bushell, Brown, Chilton, Macfie, Grainger, Rathbone, Meade-King, Duckworth, Forwood, Muspratt, Smith, Lowndes and many other household Liverpool names . . . A tribute must be paid, in passing, to the very important position that the African section of the Chamber, which owes its influence to the energy and driving power of the late Sir Alfred Jones, K.C.M.G., has won for the West African trade, not only in Liverpool but in the world. It is difficult to select individuals who have left their mark on the Chamber above others but Sir Alfred Jones is an outstanding landmark of the Chamber, if that term can be applied to a man. He really brought the Chamber to the front as a powerful factor, not only by his lavish entertainments practically to every available man of note, whose presence he could secure—and this is a very important *role* of a chamber of commerce—but

extended its influence by his phenomenal acumen and foresight. The Chamber was by no means moribund or even listless before his advent, as the foregoing sketch has shown, but Sir Alfred Jones may fairly be credited with stirring up the waters. It is difficult to select even a few of those others to whom the Chamber owes so much. Of the stalwarts of the past, happily still with us, are Sir William B. Forwood, K.B.E. (whose name appears in many an old report of the Chamber, and who worked for its good, in season and out), and Mr. Robert Gladstone, chairman of the East India and China trade section. Of those now actively engaged, the president—now for the ninth year in succession—the Earl of Derby, K.G.—has earned high opinions. Mr. Harold Bateson is an example of the great value to the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce of the legal profession in Liverpool. He has, as chairman of the council, shouldered in a masterful and successful manner the burden of the heavy responsibilities the position entails . . . that is a proof not only of ability but of loyal endurance. Amongst the executive and ex-officers of the Chamber, it is invidious to differentiate but no one will grudge a tribute to the men who for twenty-five years have worked unceasingly for the Chamber: Mr. F. C. Danson, as ex-president; Mr. Charles Lancaster, whose work on the telephone tariff alone and the telephone system has made him known in far wider circles than the Chamber; Mr. P. E. J. Hemelryk, O.R.S., who in past years worked so well for the lingual study of commerce and commercial education; Mr. G. H. Cox, who for many years carried on the work that now falls to the chairman; Mr. Stuart Deacon, now Liverpool Stipendiary-Magistrate, and many others. The present vice-presidents are Mr. George A. Moore and Lieut.-Col. H. D. Behrend, both of whom have given many years' service to the Chamber. Mr. J. F. Caröe has also been the esteemed honorary treasurer for a very long period . . .

“The Chamber is connected with the Association of

Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom, one of its members, Mr. D. F. Pennefather, M.P., being a vice-president; it has enjoyed from the first direct and intimate relations with Government departments and with Ministers of the Crown, so that it needs no intermediary in finding access to the highest quarters. During the war it has been repeatedly consulted by the Government on commercial and shipping questions, and several of its members have been called upon to serve on very important special committees.

"A word as to the first offices of the Chamber—they were modest to a degree and were located in the buildings then known as Exchange Buildings. This position, from its proximity to the Town Hall, which was, and is, practically the focus of the main business of the city, is well chosen. Of the old office fittings mention might be made of the three-quarter length portrait of Canning, the statesman, presented to the Chamber in 1851 by the artist, J. Graham Gilbert. An item of interest (to the veteran Sir Edward Russell, at any rate), is the imprint on the first annual report of 'Printed at the Mail Office, Liver Court, South Castle Street.' The Chamber however, relied in those days on the distinguished men who guided it, and the useful work done, and not on any architectural features. This is unfortunate. A large handsome building would, no doubt, have brought under the chaperonage, so to speak, of the Chamber many of the great commercial associations formed later and now independent of the Chamber. But outward embellishment did not characterise the great commercial buildings in the 'Fifties' . . .

"In concluding these notes, it would be an omission if the services of the permanent staff were to be ignored. The Chamber has always done its work with a strikingly small staff considering the amount and the variety of that work. The first secretary, Mr. Robert Tronson, appointed in 1850, acted for thirteen years, when he retired. He was succeeded by the assistant secretary,

Mr. William Blood, who retired after twenty years' service in the two capacities. He was succeeded by the then assistant secretary, Mr. Thomas Henry Barker, who retired after thirty-one years' service. He was followed by Mr. Milne, the assistant secretary who retired in 1917 after twenty-three years' service. The (then) present secretary, Mr. C. R. B. McGilchrist, J.P., in view of the critical period that the commercial world was going through, sacrificed the relaxation to which he was entitled (he had retired from his own firm), and accepted the post of secretary as from January 1st 1918. He possesses an advantage unusual to the occupier of such a post, in that he has been a practical and successful business man, with a first-hand knowledge of commercial problems; and, as a member of the council and a strenuous chairman of committees, he is well acquainted with the work and methods of the Chamber. Of his staff, Mr. John L. McCarthy, the assistant secretary, has served the Chamber for seventeen years; Mr. Sydney Evans, the chief clerk, for twenty-one years; and Mr. James Haines and Mr. Charles Partyn, senior clerks, for eighteen and sixteen years, respectively.

“Finally, the Chamber has owed much to the loyal and unswerving support of the Press of Liverpool, which has passed many a useful criticism on its labours and aspirations in the seventy years of its existence.”

Notwithstanding all the difficulties of production, this volume must have proved of immense value to the Chamber and its members who showed themselves anxious to resume commercial relations with overseas countries deprived of British goods, and deprived of opportunity to sell their raw materials to Britain, during the years 1914-1918.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The " Inter-War " Years—The Merseyside Civic Society
—Transport—1939.

AT THE conclusion of the First World War the Chamber immediately took the most energetic steps towards the resumption of normal trade. It decided on quarterly meetings for the time being at any rate, and at the first of these meetings, held on 3rd March, 1919, there were introduced resolutions on three important post-war subjects, namely the peace terms, early resumption of normal industrial activities and the excess profits tax. All of these resolutions received the unanimous support of members. It is unnecessary to quote those somewhat lengthy resolutions in full; sufficient to indicate that each of them in its own way expressed the views of the commercial community at that time and in fact would probably have received the same unanimous support had they been put before any meeting of business men after the Second World War. The arguments in favour of the total abolition of the excess profits tax are singularly appropriate in this connection. The council also passed a resolution urging the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to take steps to secure the internationalisation of the Rhine waterway, a resolution receiving the active support of the president, Lord Derby.

The Chamber regarded the economic outlook "as distinctly disturbing, a situation so complicated as to render forecasts practically impossible; conditions which have arisen in industrial and commercial life will tax the intellects of the most competent to the maximum."

The chairman indicated that in war-time every one did his utmost to bring hostilities to a successful conclusion and wage increases were regarded as a mere detail. Respon-

sible representatives of the Government, aided by labour leaders, promised a higher standard of living for all—a new and better world was to arise from the ashes of war. But as it has turned out neither the Government nor the labour leaders were able to provide the promised conditions; in fact they seemed rather surprised at their total inability either to control or alleviate those inflexible economic laws which have existed since Adam. The inevitable result was painful disillusionment in almost every direction. Those statements by the chairman have a familiar ring about them today and this quotation from his subsequent remarks is particularly apt:

“High cost of production from the point of view of labour costs, the burden of crushing taxation, costly transport, and violent fluctuations in the rates of exchange throughout the world have been amplified by constant unrest in the world of labour, by frequent strikes and by the uncertain outlook which has prevented the commercial community exercising to the best advantage that degree of initiative, sagacity and perspicacity of which Merseyside business men are capable.”

From his own experience in connection with the work of the Chamber, the chairman said that exporters found grave difficulty in doing business with their pre-war customers, and also with new customers owing to the uncertainty of delivery dates, this uncertainty being due to labour unrest.

As weeks passed into months and the year 1922 brought no relief to the dismal economic outlook, a deputation from the Association of British Chambers of Commerce waited on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Liverpool Chamber's representative on this occasion being Mr. G. A. Moore. This deputation endeavoured to impress upon the Chancellor certain factors which it regarded as essential to the revival of trade and a reduction in unemployment. Among those were a much more drastic reduction of spending by the Government, a cut of at least £200,000,000 was necessary; a substantial reduction of income tax, further borrowing to be avoided if at all possible; abolition of the

corporation tax, freedom from interference by the inland revenue authorities as to the method by which balance sheets were made up, particularly in reference to stock valuations; the community desired the absolute assurance that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Treasury would again become the real guardian of the public purse; if this guardianship was carried out with real courage, the Chancellor need not fear that he would receive the whole-hearted support of the community.

The deputation further requested that not only the Chancellor himself but the Cabinet as a whole should use the undernoted questionnaire as a yardstick when measuring the advisability of incurring any new expenditure of public monies:—Could the country afford the proposed expenditure AT ALL? Was the whole proposal sound in principle? What was the immediate cost going to be? What was the ultimate and consequential cost going to be? That any change which imposes further burdens on industry and commerce should not be put into operation until the Association of British Chambers of Commerce and other bodies have had an opportunity of considering such changes and expressing their views.

Meantime, however, certain domestic items must be recorded. There was for instance, the appointment of the president to the Paris Embassy, usually regarded as the "plum" of the Diplomatic Service. As a man of singular independence of speech and judgment, Lord Derby spoke his mind with both moderation and courage; he had the rare gift of being able to banish doubt or misunderstanding by meeting them both with a frank geniality. His reputation as a sportsman immediately formed a link of sympathy between him and France; and in his desire to amplify commercial transactions between his own country and France he found that his knowledge of Lancashire stood him in good stead.

On the other hand the Chamber recorded with most sincere regret the death of one of its most distinguished secretaries Mr. Alan H. Milne, C.M.G., B.A., after twenty-



Liverpool of the past—site of Central Station



Liverpool of the future—Anglican cathedral and approaches

five years of continuous service. He also contributed much useful work to the formation of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine for which he was made a Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.

The labour unrest which appears to be a feature of British life after a major war developed to an embarrassing extent despite the efforts of labour leaders. The Right Hon. J. R. Clynes, M.P., referred to "the tyranny of labour" in an article published by the *Daily Chronicle* and reprinted in the Chamber's *Monthly Journal*. Another useful article at the time was contributed to the *Journal* by Mr. G. H. Roberts, M.P., his subject being the "Intolerance of Labour." On the other hand, as an indication that the Chamber felt it necessary to show as many sides as possible, there were published articles on "Humanising Industry," "Combines and Industrial Evolution," "Are We Neglecting Foreign Trade?" and a further paper by Mr Clynes, in which he referred to the "folly of 'canny'". At this time an article by Sir Ernest J. P. Benn, Bart, was reprinted under the heading "Time is Money". Sir Ernest's own firm was the first publishing house, and one of the first companies in Britain, to adopt the five-day week immediately war finished, one condition being that all members of the staff accomplished the same amount of work as previously. One can understand Sir Ernest's disappointment at the fact that after a Second World War so few concerns have been able to maintain this condition as an integral part of the five-day week policy.

The Chamber was represented on a special committee appointed by the Association of British Chambers of Commerce to report on the question of unemployment relief. The committee reported that development of trade and industry constituted the only permanent cure for unemployment, yet considered that the following matters, amongst others, demanded immediate attention: the various authorities granting relief should be coordinated; the total relief granted should be substantially less than the

lowest standard wage ruling in the district; the wages of municipal employees should not exceed the wages paid by outside employers for similar work; the administration of the Trade Board Acts should be drastically altered; no further unemployment relief should be granted to women on account of their previous occupation on munitions or similar war work.

The Chamber was requested to furnish authoritative comparisons of wages paid for the same class of work by the municipality, the tramway company, the local railway, and Merseyside private concerns.

By invitation of the Chamber an exhibition of foreign samples was held in the board room by the Department of Overseas Trade; the representatives of the department indicated their complete satisfaction with the large number of people who had visited the exhibition and the volume of enquiries that had resulted.

The Finance Bill, 1923-24, received careful consideration by a special sub-committee and a number of points were submitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer through the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, the chairman of the Chamber being one of a deputation who waited upon the Chancellor.

The trade sections of the Chamber, affected by the Hague Rules and the Rules for the Carriage of Goods at Sea, considered the effects of those rules on the interests of importers and although the majority were in favour of immediate adoption, there were some sections which thought that the rules did not go far enough and that steps should be taken to procure effective legislation on the lines of the Canadian Water Carriage of Goods Act and the Harter Act. Neither the corn trade nor the timber trade considered the Hague Rules really satisfactory.

Amongst official visitors who made the year 1924 outstanding in the history of the Chamber were members of the Cherbourg Chamber of Commerce; the Prime Minister of Australia, the Right Hon. S. M. Bruce, M.C.; Mr. W. Leaf, D.Litt., chairman of the Westminster Bank and

vice-president of the International Chamber of Commerce and Senator the Hon. R. V. Wilson, Minister for Health and Immigration for Australia.

The Chamber was invited to reply to a series of questions drawn up by the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, so that the latter body might complete its evidence to be given before a committee appointed by H.M. Government "to consider the report on the National Debt, and on the incidence of existing taxation with special reference to their effect on trade, industry, employment and national credit." Those questions and the Chamber's replies are outstanding in their treatment of the problems that faced the commercial community at that period; problems which closely resemble those which face the commercial community in 1950. It would be refreshing, indeed, to find a Socialist Government inviting opinions on "the incidence of existing taxation with special reference to its effect on trade, industry, employment and national credit." As Liverpool had pioneered so many activities in the past it is strange indeed to find that at the council's meeting on 1st December, 1925, the following resolution was passed:

"That the council of the Chamber should be recommended to urge upon the Liverpool Corporation the desirability of framing rules . . . similar to those adopted by London and Manchester, with regard to the parking of cars in public streets."

Members of the Chamber today will agree that Liverpool could profitably adopt some of the more recent rules adopted in London, especially with regard to the prohibition of parking in certain streets and/or at certain hours.

During the general strike of 1926 the Chamber's premises were placed unreservedly at the disposal of the local emergency haulage committee, organised to regulate the transport of food supplies and other essential goods. This committee utilised the Chamber's offices as headquarters and the Chamber's staff undertook much of the detailed work which was instrumental in transporting thousands

of tons of food through Liverpool to the North and Midlands while some supplies were sent to London.

The trade recession which had set in after the First World War was gradually overtaken and by the end of 1927 the industrial prospects appeared brighter than for almost ten years. At that time it appeared as though the fatuity of discord in industrial relationships had been realised; not only did 1927 prove a year of industrial peace but it also saw an advance in that much better relationships were established between employer and employee. The Liverpool Chamber sent representatives to the World Economic Conference, held under the auspices of the League of Nations in May. Attended by 194 delegates representing fifty different nations, and the International Chamber of Commerce endorsed the resolutions of the World Conference calling for a halt to those practices which had proved themselves adverse to the economic recovery of Europe.

The bright hopes of 1928 soon faded into a period when the basic industries experienced increased unemployment and lower production. This was mainly experienced in the north, as industrialists in the south had established a number of new industries producing mainly articles of the luxury type and now known as the light industries. But obviously the light industries, being dependent upon the basic industries of Britain for their machinery, fuels, transport, and raw materials, cannot exist by themselves. This fact gave confidence to the industrialists in northern England, but that itself was not enough; they themselves investigated the possibilities of creating light industries in suitable areas, a development which has been continued right into 1950. In common with other commercial centres, Liverpool suffered from the slow movement of the national overseas trade, this also emphasising the desirability of attracting a larger number of industries to Merseyside.

A further deterioration developed during 1929 and 1930, with commerce held in suspense by financial disturbance

and the collapse of commodity prices. The sensational boom and collapse on the stock exchanges of America, and the Hatry group crash, all found reflections in world markets; and while those events may be regarded as storms, more or less widespread, which were inevitable and helped to clear the air, the domestic position was not helped by the coming into office of a minority Government. Its adherence to political beliefs threatened whatever slight measure of prosperity might have developed during this period. The Chamber found that the pressure of taxation formed one of the greatest hindrances, not only to enterprise but also to the possibility of commercial firms holding their own. Unemployment tended to increase, while dear money and a sharp drop in prices exerted their usual retarding influence. The Chamber loyally supported the "Come to Britain Movement" formed under the presidency of the Earl of Derby. The council of the Chamber expressed great interest in the work of the Liverpool Organisation of which the chairman was Mr. F. J. Marquis, later Lord Woolton.

After the Imperial Conference, it was hoped that better channels would open for improved trade between the Empire countries, despite the wide divergence on fiscal policy between Britain and the overseas countries. Trade missions were despatched to South Africa, the Far East and Egypt with the intention of increasing sales of goods manufactured in Britain and particularly of encouraging trade relationships. The council of the Chamber expressed grave concern about the way in which public expenditure was being permitted to run riot; instead of drastically reducing this expenditure the policy was to meet it by means of additional taxation. The council reiterated that the high-water mark in taxation had been reached and that no further additions could be permitted without risk of sabotaging the nation's industrial and commercial welfare.

A brighter note appeared in the formation of a Junior Chamber of Commerce for Liverpool, proposed in January

and inaugurated on 20th May, 1931, when the new body elected a chairman and formed a provisional committee to draft a constitution. Qualification for election to membership was restricted to junior partners and junior directors, the object of the committee being to encourage a civic and commercial spirit in the young businessman, to encourage young men to take an interest in the vital matters affecting commerce and the civic life of the community, to discuss and report on problems of commercial and economic importance, to hold debates, round-table discussions, lectures and other meetings for trade and professional stimulation, and to extend knowledge on industrial and commercial questions. It was also arranged that the Junior Chamber should keep in close touch with its parent body on all matters of mutual interest.

When the National Government took office and its supplementary Budget was introduced, imposing an "almost fantastic weight of taxation and sacrifice," the Chamber recorded that their members' chief concern would be not so much to make a profit as to avoid a loss in their transactions. The Imperial Economic Conference at Ottawa involved important issues directly concerning all members of the Chamber and while most members were prepared to make certain sacrifices, it was difficult to foresee how workable arrangements could be made, although several of the more optimistic members felt less concern on that account. Despite the discouraging outlook overseas, the Chamber endeavoured to support trade within Great Britain, a practical step in this direction being the grant of £100 towards the expenses of a new body formed in April, 1931, the Lancashire Industrial Development Council, which had as president the Earl of Derby, and the president of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce as chairman, the deputy chairman being the Liverpool Chamber's own chairman. This council immediately appointed a general manager and permanent staff and embarked upon a promising programme of publicity; it explored problems connected with migration of labour

from and to new industries, the finance of new industries, and the development of marketing facilities for local products. The towns co-operating with this council included Manchester, Birkenhead, Bolton, Burnley, Oldham, Preston, Stockport, Widnes and Wigan.

In accordance with the economic policies so typical of 1931, the council decided to abandon its usual practice of holding an annual dinner. The Chamber considered that the whole basis of international relationships rested on a fabric of "complete and insecure artificiality." It reiterated that trade ran through constricted channels, while the credit of many nations was being bolstered up by the most transparent of subterfuges. Almost every nation seemed to totter on the brink of insolvency. The blatant selfishness of nations was about to defeat its own purpose. Internal trade occupied a very uncertain position, especially in Liverpool, which suffered from a virtual suppression of international trade. It seemed that President Roosevelt's advice—that each country must first put its own house in order—had been accepted too literally, nations continuing in the unhappy policy of building roofs whilst neglecting the foundations for a wider recovery. The position was not improved by the repercussions of Government intervention and Government planning. In fact this Government policy, superimposed on the delicately-poised marketing organisation could not but have a disastrous effect.

In April, 1934, the Chamber presented to its president, the Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., a portrait painted by Sir William Llewellyn, P.R.A. On this occasion Lord Derby made one of his happiest speeches in which he said that while some people credited him with the double desire of winning the Derby and becoming Prime Minister neither of these was included in his ambitions. He said that while he had won the Derby, he was glad that he had not been Prime Minister. He stated that one of his most sincere ambitions was to give, in his lifetime, some of the service which his forefathers had given to the country; he felt that he had the confidence—he might also say the

affection—of the people of Liverpool and that was a thing of which anyone might be proud. Lord Derby and his family expressed so much delight with the portrait that it was decided to have it exhibited at the Royal Academy, and at the autumn exhibition in the Liverpool Art Gallery; later it was transferred to the portrait gallery at Knowsley as one of the heirlooms of his family. Sir William Llewellyn was commissioned to paint a replica, and this now hangs in the council room of the Chamber.

The Chamber expressed some concern about the use of the word "prosperity" as applied to the economic condition of the country in 1936 and 1937. Certainly Britain appeared prosperous in comparison with many other countries; profit-making continued on a satisfactory level, there was little unemployment, and the living standard remained on a remarkable high level. At the same time close observers expressed apprehension from time to time, anticipating a deterioration of industrial activity and the possibility that whatever progress had been made might fail to maintain momentum of trade in the event of a serious slump. If, however, discussions at the Imperial Conference helped to remove some of the fetters binding world trade at that time, and if there could be a greater degree of political security, then even the pessimists agreed that it would be justifiable to anticipate a prospect more favourable to genuine prosperity than any which had been contemplated since 1914. Yet should the optimists' view fail to materialise, the Chamber arranged for public lectures to be given on protection against air raid attack, the lecturer being appointed by the Air Raid Precautions Department, then a new department of the Home Office. In further attempts to consolidate trade activities in Lancashire, the Chamber invited the county borough of St. Helens to co-operate with the Liverpool Chamber, St. Helens having no chamber of its own.

During those troublesome years, peace and false alarms, rumours and counter-rumours being prominent features, the Chamber used every avenue of information whereby it

might be ready for both the best and the worst—that is, for peace or war. With such a picture as the inter-war years presents to us today, it says a great deal for the Chamber that it should have been able to pursue all of its traditional activities and yet organise to run parallel with them a carefully phrased series of warnings, year by year, which offset to a great extent the light-hearted promises of prosperity in which so many ill-informed people indulged. The Chamber's attitude at this time is admirably summarised by the conclusion to a review of the year's trade just before 1939:

"The world at large is being robbed by attrition of all that should be held sacred in the name of civilisation, and is being so fundamentally disorganised that it will be fortunate if it does not suffer a major catastrophe: not so much the abomination of yet another war but the catastrophe of a prolonged impoverishment by the negation of the opportunity to achieve a vital common purpose."

Quite apart from all these weighty matters which occupied so much of the attention of the Chamber *qua* Chamber, the inter-war years witnessed a steady growth in directions which initially may have affected the Chamber only indirectly but which were soon to become integral with all its activities. Of these, perhaps the most far-reaching was transport. A change, unique in history, resulted as a consequence of the development and application of the internal combustion engine, which bringing in its wake swifter and more economical vehicles, demanded corresponding improvements in roads, docks, and ferries, in city streets and traffic control, and in legislation. In due course new sections were to be formed as road and air transport gradually became more and more essential in a complete commercial transport organisation: but in accordance with tradition, the Chamber had its own line of approach.

With its wide basis of representation and much carefully-indexed data of technical knowledge and professional

experience always available, the Chamber (even from its earliest years) has regarded Liverpool as a gateway through which must pass raw materials and manufactured goods. It has always clearly recognised that while British factories depend so largely upon raw materials entering via the port, yet many of these same factories depend upon Liverpool for receiving and despatching those manufactured goods to other British ports and to ports overseas. Taking this wide view then, the Chamber has steadfastly refused to support any proposal of a one-sided or sectional nature, always regarding a new proposition in the light of its potential contribution to Merseyside generally and to Liverpool in particular. This attitude shows clearly all through the long and intricate negotiations which led to the construction of the Mersey Tunnel. On more than one occasion the council stressed that this project, if it was to serve Merseyside to its maximum, must be accompanied by roads better designed to deal with the traffic which an under-river tunnel would attract. The final paragraph of the resolution quoted elsewhere may be taken as typical of the Chamber's general policy. In transport matters the Chamber made frequent criticisms and recommendations which led to great improvements in railway communications, and during its early days no other organisation could have been more determined, nor more successful, in improving the goods and passenger services linking Merseyside with London, other British ports, and the inland manufacturing centres on which the port is based. Since those early days, the Chamber has dealt with many different problems including pilferage, delays in mail trains, cartage rates and the inadequate supply of wagons.

Motor transport, and the great changes which it brought about in commerce generally, led to many new developments which affected the work of the Chamber and its sections. Early in 1919 a committee was formed to organise road transport in south-west Lancashire so that the waste involved by running vehicles unloaded on their return journey might be eliminated by securing return

loads. For some time this committee worked in co-operation with the Manchester Chamber, the results proving mutually satisfactory. This was taken a stage further in November when there was formed the Liverpool Motor Haulage Clearing House under the management of an official who had previously spent six years in the traffic department of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. This organisation endeavoured to arrange return loads from other towns, amongst those being London, Bolton, Leicester and Nottingham. The hope was expressed that great benefits would result as inter-communication became more generally established between clearing houses of a similar type in different parts of the country. The railway strike proved how vital road transport had become, congestion at the port and in railway sidings having reached a stage where Government vehicles had to assist in clearing cargo accumulations. This step was taken in response to the urgent demands of the commercial community whose business operations had been gravely affected by the breakdown of railway transport. A comment upon the country's situation in those days indicated that:

"Those who have had an opportunity of making a journey on any of the great main roads during the past week have been amazed at the manner in which those connected with Government departments and the motor industry have responded to the call made upon them to provide a substitute for railway passenger and goods services. It was an opportunity of demonstrating the functions of road transport for which those engaged in this business might otherwise have waited for years. Within a few hours essential services for foodstuffs and other necessary supplies were organised and operated, and within two or three days some thousands of motor vehicles were handling the foodstuffs on a traffic schedule as systematic as the railways. A particularly satisfactory feature was the organisation of milk transport and the distribution of all available supplies to the correct districts."

While this unfortunate railway strike provided an exceptional opportunity to road transport—an opportunity which road hauliers were not slow to utilise—it also focussed attention upon the bad condition into which so many British highways had been allowed to fall. Not only were the roads much too narrow for the traffic but the neglect of maintenance had allowed them to deteriorate to such an extent as to involve vehicle owners in heavy outlays for tyres and repairs. The Chamber held the opinion that no Government ought to shrink from the outlay which would be involved in reconstructing and widening existing roads, which would form part of the national highway system, and in constructing new roads where their necessity had been proved by experience. The congestion of the national ports had almost paralysed the transport system as the result of the withdrawal of railway facilities for a short period, but even so, all the assistance given by motor vehicles would be required if normal transport was to be restored within a reasonable time. Despite all the information and experience made so freely available, and although the Ministry of Transport realised the urgent need for a trunk road to be constructed between Liverpool and Manchester, the community at large indicated no great desire to grasp the opportunity thus offered. It became the Chamber's clear duty, therefore, to act, and in following up the Ministry's offer of one half of the estimated cost of a completely new highway the Chamber stressed the following points:

1. The necessity of developing the road system for traffic to and from the manufacturing districts of north-west Lancashire and south-west Yorkshire has become increasingly great and during the past twelve months this increase has been of such an extent as to demand immediate action. Tonnage passing over the eight main roads radiating from Liverpool in 1913 was at the rate of 884,000 per annum while nine years later it had reached 9,000,000.

2. In 1922 the Ministry of Transport suggested a

scheme for the construction of a motor trunk road between Liverpool and Manchester, the Ministry to pay a grant of 50 per cent. of the estimated cost.

3. Much time has been wasted in negotiations with the local authorities concerned who were expected to provide the balance.

4. There was a danger that in discussing financial questions with local authorities, the vital importance of the trunk road to the trade of Liverpool would be overlooked.

5. The Chamber, therefore, has ascertained the views of the whole trading community and at a special meeting of the general purposes committee it was resolved that the Chamber considers a trunk road essential and strongly supports the proposed Liverpool-Manchester road or some suitable alternative.

6. The Chamber appointed a committee to investigate the question and to obtain the views of all trade associations in Liverpool.

7. All trade interests in the district expressed themselves in favour of the scheme as a national necessity, with the exception of the railway companies and cart owners who were afraid that their particular interests might suffer.

In his speech at the annual general meeting in May, 1923, the chairman stated that the scheme had the unanimous approval of the trading community, who were best qualified to judge of future requirements. The city council, who had to decide the matter, were equally interested in any steps towards the development and preservation of the port, because the life and progress of the city depended almost entirely upon the overseas trade through the port. He emphasised that while people pointed to the geographical position of Liverpool as making it predominant for all time it must not be forgotten that in these days of scientific progress and specialised engineering a great deal might be achieved by other ports to compensate for what they lacked geographically. He affirmed

that the Chamber would continue strongly to support the trunk road scheme. Many of the original arguments in favour of the Liverpool-Manchester road were repeated at the annual general meeting in 1924. As indicating the Chamber's unbiassed attitude towards transport it must be recorded that during 1925 and 1926 the Chamber's *Monthly Journal* ran a series of articles on railway transport matters, amongst the subjects being railway rates, private sidings, addressing of merchandise, basic slag, demurrage charges, railway-owned docks, cartage, claims, and a large number of technical points in connection with special railway rates. This series was followed by the formation of the railway rates advisory committee and the appointment of a traffic advisor whose services were placed freely at the disposal of the commercial community. The traffic advisor's first action was to deal with the essential preliminary matters arising from the railway rates revision, and the series of articles describing the character of the changes was reprinted and published as a handbook which found its way into every port and part of the country. It was confidently stated at the time that traders as a whole felt under a debt of gratitude to the Chamber for a service unique in the history of the Chamber and of commercial transport.

In 1926 the proposal for a private motorway from the Mersey to Birmingham was brought to the notice of the transport committee. This motorway would be confined to mechanically propelled traffic and tolls would be levied on a mileage basis. Horse-drawn traffic would be prohibited and pedestrians would be compelled to use whatever bridges or subways were provided for their benefit. While expressing the view that any further highways linking Liverpool with the Midlands would most assuredly be welcomed, yet the committee felt that neither Liverpool nor any of the boroughs associated therewith could be expected to bear any financial responsibility. The proposal obviously had been inspired by motorways then being constructed on the continent; and while there can

be no doubt of the ultimate value of such highways, reserved exclusively for fast commercial traffic, the year 1950 has dawned without Britain having a single modern highway of this kind.

The opening of the complete Gladstone dock system, intended to perpetuate the memory of Mr. Robert Gladstone, chairman of the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board from 1899 to 1911, proved an outstanding event of 1927. This fine new enterprise costing approximately £4,000,000 had been undertaken in stages since 1910. The opening of the graving dock by King George V in 1913 was followed by the war and all its consequent interruptions. The main constructional work had to be postponed and not until 1922 was it resumed, despite a great number of difficulties which had accumulated in the meantime. At the opening ceremony in July, 1927, the King and Queen proceeded from the Liverpool Landing Stage on board the tender *Galatea* to the Gladstone dock and after the opening ceremony the King stated:

"The expansion of your trade implies an advancement of world commerce, and a strengthening of those links of mutual advantage which unite the peoples of the British Empire."

He paid a tribute to the foresight of the technical specialists who had planned the admirable system of docks and to their "tenacity and perseverance in carrying out this scheme in spite of exceptional difficulties . . . I confidently hope that the trade of Merseyside as the chief port of the industrial areas in the North and Midlands will continue to flourish and expand, and that in the future as in the past the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board will ensure the provision of necessary facilities for the growth of the commerce which they serve."

To serve this commerce, however, demanded more and better road transport and this the Chamber resolutely set itself to provide. At the seventh annual conference of the Institute of Transport held in Liverpool in May, 1928, an address was given on "A Survey of Liverpool's Road

Traffic Requirements" by Mr. J. A. Brodie, past president of the Institution of Civil Engineers, formerly city engineer of Liverpool and joint engineer to the Mersey Tunnel Committee. Mr. Brodie paid tribute to the leading part taken by Liverpool in developing heavy motor traffic, stressing that this had resulted in great benefit to the country as a whole. Traffic in and out of Liverpool in 1913 by motor vehicles amounted to under 1,000,000 tons, but by 1927 this had reached a total of over 15,000,000 tons. This volume would increase as industry developed and as the port developed correspondingly. The necessity today was for more numerous highways adequately designed to carry the increasing volume of traffic. He referred to a number of recent proposals that had been adopted, one of them being the trunk road then under construction from Manchester to Liverpool. He urged that this highway should be continued right into Yorkshire. The new Mersey Tunnel involved even further concentration on roads with access to the river, and his address included considerable detail about further roads into Cheshire and towards the Potteries and Birmingham, another highway leading directly north through Preston, and yet another across the Dee estuary into North Wales.

When the Royal Commission on Transport announced its readiness to receive suggestions from responsible bodies as to improvements in road transport, covered by the terms of reference, the Chamber appointed its representative on the Associated Chambers' special sub-committee to co-ordinate views of those parties interested and to make representations to the Royal Commission. The Chamber published a list of five headings under which information might be tabulated, and there is no doubt that the publication of this information went a long way to clarify the views of the sections and committees directly interested in road transport.

When the railway companies sought powers to operate road vehicles, the Chamber intimated that after due consideration it would raise no objection to the companies'

proposals, always provided that proper safeguards were made to prevent the development of anything approaching a monopoly.

A proposal to bridge the Ribble estuary with a George Bennie railplane and road bridge, voiced in 1931, was considered by the transport committee who regarded it sympathetically, as the committee would regard any proposal designed to improve transport communications; but the committee could express no view as to the demand or benefit from such a scheme under normal conditions.

The year 1932 witnessed further developments in the formation of a new transport section consisting of firms interested almost entirely in one phase or another of road transport. To ensure identity of interest in the discussion of transport problems as a whole, however, arrangements were made whereby the committee of this section was represented on the transport committee of the Chamber and similarly the transport committee sent a representative to the road transport section. The latter plunged into a great mass of detail immediately and amongst the items on the first agenda were the labelling of provisions, the cancellation of insurance policies, the establishment of a fish market at Liverpool docks, lights on horse-drawn vehicles, overtime for delivery ex-store, delivery of small consignments to steamship companies, and lifting charges on deliveries to ships.

The East Lancashire road, connecting Liverpool with Salford, (and intended to form the first stage of a commercial highway giving direct access from the Mersey to the industrial areas of Yorkshire), was opened for traffic on 27th April, 1933. This roadway is 120 ft. wide from fence to fence and allows facilities for two carriage-ways in each direction with footpaths on both sides each 10 ft. in width. After its opening a number of islands were placed at points where the arterial road is fed by secondary roads. These islands were severely criticised by one of Lancashire's oldest and best-known coroners, Sir Samuel Brighouse, on the grounds that not only did they slow up main road

traffic, but placed secondary road traffic on the same basis as that using the main road. This, in his opinion, defeated one of the main objects of the new highway which had been designed to provide fast transport between Liverpool docks and the inland towns. Sir Samuel had other means in view whereby side-road traffic could be compelled to slow down and give priority to fast-moving traffic on the main highway. It seems quite evident that Sir Samuel, were he alive today, would be still more dissatisfied with the road which he helped in his own way to promote, for it still lacks a clear link to the docks and to the Queensway tunnel.

Approaching Liverpool from Manchester direction the vehicle driver, who is a stranger to the district, finds himself leaving this remarkably good highway and plunging into the built-up district of Everton, from which it is difficult to discover a way to the centre of Liverpool. On more than one occasion a Manchester driver, having become lost in the Everton maze, ultimately has found himself once more on a modern stretch of road and continued blithely for several miles before discovering that he was well on his way back to Manchester.

From time to time the transport committee has dealt with horse-drawn traffic, protesting against any interference with its unrestricted use; with the lighting of road vehicles and exemptions under certain conditions when a red reflector may be used instead of a lighted lamp; pedestrian crossings, and a request to the Chief Constable that the general public be informed as to their use; the tramway services, and a suggestion that tramways in Lord St. and Dale St. should be linked with Victoria St.; and a proposed tube system to relieve traffic congestion. As far as the last item is concerned, it is not surprising that the scheme should be turned down in view of the fact that the expenditure, even in pre-war days, would have involved the ratepayers in a sum of £8,000,000.

The road transport section devoted much time and thought to a scheme whereby uniformity in the design and

construction of roads could be achieved throughout the country, especially in view of the announcement by the Government that it intended to spend £100,000,000 on roads and bridges, and to appoint a special control board for the purpose. The section declared itself opposed to the creation of any board which might lead to additional expenditure and to conflict with local authorities. The section unanimously decided to transmit their recommendations to the Association of British Chambers of Commerce. The road transport section requested the School of Commerce to form classes for the education of administrative and operative staffs of road transport undertakings; and subsequently views were exchanged with the principal with the idea of obtaining co-operation from those who would be prepared to act as lecturers.

The Liverpool Junior Chamber of Commerce submitted a report to the council in August, 1937, which was referred to the transport committee for examination and guidance. The report dealt with trans-shipment in the Port of Liverpool and proved to be of such a comprehensive and practical nature as to merit consideration by a special sub-committee; it was afterwards reprinted in the Chamber's monthly journal or, as it had been known since January 1927, the *Liverpool Trade Review*.

The transport committee dealt with delays occurring in delivering goods on the dock quays and considered various proposals for improving conditions under which ratepayers used the Mersey Tunnel. It requested that monthly contracts be issued for vehicles bearing trade plates, that concessions in tolls should be given to firms running trade vehicles and private cars for business purposes between Liverpool and Birkenhead; it repeated its suggestion that a bus service should be introduced so that the public might pass more freely through the tunnel between Liverpool and Birkenhead. It continued to press for a suitable bus and motor-coach station for long-distance passenger traffic by road. A representative was sent from the committee to

a newly appointed standing committee on transport in Lancashire formed at the instigation of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce. Views were sent, at the request of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, on the design of one-way traffic signs stressing that they should be uniform throughout the country, that they should be so designed as to attract attention, and that in all one-way streets there should be clear directions as to how to reach the main road. After much careful consideration and consultation with the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, it was agreed that a small leaflet should be issued to vehicle drivers so that they might find it less difficult to reach the docks to which their goods were consigned. The committee expressed its appreciation of the successful action taken by the Junior Chamber in bringing about improvements in car-parking arrangements and thoroughly approved of having the car parks under the supervision of the Motor Car Park Attendants' Association.

On the revival of the local committee of the Road Improvements Association in 1924, the Chamber's transport committee was invited to send a representative. This association existed to call attention to the need for road improvements and to recommend the construction of new roads; it endeavoured to maintain contact with local authorities and accomplished some remarkably fine work. After discussion by the council it was agreed that two members of the committee should be appointed and ultimately the chairman of the Chamber served for some time as chairman of the local committee. Later the committee made contact with the British Road Federation and an official of the federation came to Liverpool to advise on post-war road developments.

From time to time the Chamber expressed views, or received an invitation to express its views, on a wide variety of projects—e.g., the Forth and Clyde Canal, and the Suez Canal—while the appropriate sections accomplished most valuable work in drawing attention to the need for and bringing about improved communications, postal,

telegraph, and telephone, as well as road and rail, in Africa, South America and other parts of the globe.

When the Chamber assumed its original formation the need was already evident for a speedy and frequent means of communication along the increasing line of docks and two years afterwards it was proposed to erect an "elevated" railway for a distance of about four miles connecting the chief docks at that period. Support for this scheme was not forthcoming, however, and it was dropped until 1878 when the Chamber, along with other progressive bodies, took action which resulted in Parliamentary powers being granted to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. Despite the obvious need for this project it appears that the board declined to add railway-owning to their other responsibilities. In 1887 a second act was passed and in due course the Liverpool Overhead Railway Company received incorporation under the chairmanship of that progressive citizen, Sir William Forwood. The original contract provided for a railway line extending from Herculanum dock to Alexandra dock and this section was opened for traffic in 1893. Subsequently the line was extended at both ends and connections were made with railways running to Southport and various Liverpool stations. The value of this enterprise cannot be over-estimated; in fact today it would be difficult for the docks to operate without an overhead railway. Quite apart from its value in this connection it forms an economical and effective way whereby tourists may see the docks most conveniently and from a height which would otherwise be quite impossible.

Air transport having reached a more satisfactory stage, being forced at a rapid pace in the hothouse of wartime's strenuous temperature, the Chamber naturally turned its attention to this newest form of transport early in 1919. Members were advised that the Air Ministry had authorised the beginning of civilian flying on 1st May and this was described as being "not only an epoch in aerial navigation but also one in commercial progress". The Air Ministry gave details of three lines of aerial tracks across the centre

of England which would be open to civilian aircraft. Doubt was expressed as to how pilots could be compelled to keep within those "trackless tracks" and in an article which appeared in the *Monthly Journal* it was suggested that possibly an aerial police force might be employed as in California. In view of the great interest being shown at this time the Liverpool Chamber invited Major-General Sir Frederick Sykes, Director of the Civil Aviation Department, to address members on civil aviation. Sir Frederick intimated that during the war (First World War) British aircraft had flown a total of over 1,000,000 hours—about 114 years. He looked forward to the day when British aircraft would have rendered at least an equal service in peacetime. He drew a parallel between the days of motor transport and again with railway transport, when the man-in-the-street poured ridicule upon those new forms of locomotion, and he reminded his distinguished audience that just as those forms of transport had proved themselves and were now a part of everyday life so too would air transport become an integral part of civilisation. It was only fitting that an address of such an ultra-modern type should utilise a modern form of illustration and consequently Sir Frederick concluded with a cinema film. The president of the Chamber, in thanking Sir Frederick for his remarkable lecture, gave an assurance that the Chamber took a most sympathetic attitude towards the development of civil aviation.

The new form of transport, however, was to experience many teething troubles and the next item to be recorded by the Chamber was its deep regret that accidents happened in every phase of travel whether by sea, road, or rail. It was stressed that there had been remarkably few fatalities in the recent developments in aerial navigation and consequently the disaster which befell the airship R33 was all the more to be regretted. Unfortunately, still more serious accidents were to be experienced, but, none the less, experimental work and scientific research marched forward down the years, slowly defeating and at times completely

vanquishing those two enemies of progress, apathy and ignorance.

On the inauguration of a permanent Liverpool-Belfast air service, the Chamber was represented by Mr. J. M. A. Glover who took with him on the initial flight a letter from Lord Derby to the Belfast Chamber of Commerce and a few days later the Belfast president flew by the same service and was received by the chairman of the Liverpool Chamber and the assistant secretary.

At a meeting of the council in January, 1929, Mr. R. H. Thornton, one of Liverpool's most enterprising shipowners and widely experienced in air transport technique, proposed that a special committee be set up to focus the interest of local traders in air transport and to enquire in co-operation with the Liverpool and District Aero Club what immediate steps could be taken to provide the air transport facilities which Liverpool required. Amplifying his resolution, Mr. Thornton stated that he was impressed by the fact that, while other parts of the country either slept or scoffed, Liverpool in the past had adopted ideas which proved to be of incalculable commercial value. Despite much adverse criticism Liverpool had built the first self-contained wet dock in 1715, and had taken the leading part in exploiting railway developments in 1829. He emphasised that Liverpool should not make the mistake of assuming that it must continue to prosper because of some industries which happened to strike root on Merseyside fifty or a hundred years ago. He referred to the high technical skill of the British engineer and indicated that Merseyside was not doing nearly enough to bring about the trade revival in which that skill played a vital part:

"Trade is quickened by rapid transport and air transport has far passed the stage of being a romantic novelty. On the continent and in America passenger air transport has become a commercial reality, and a vast network of reliable air-lines is already in existence and has introduced a new era in making practicable the

personal control of multiple enterprises. In Central Europe alone there are in operation 170 separate air routes connecting 500 of the largest towns."

Mr. Thornton advocated that Liverpool should be in direct communication with Antwerp, Amsterdam, Hamburg and Copenhagen, and that the shipping industry could make considerable use of such services for the rapid transport of correspondence, relief crews, surveyors and superintendents. He concluded by outlining the general progress of commercial aviation and urged the Chamber to arouse the interest of Liverpool in the commercial importance of air transport facilities; to co-operate with the Liverpool and District Aero Club; to ensure that Liverpool became a terminal of some of the continental lines then terminating at London; to press for the provision of aerial taxi facilities for cross-country journeys; and to secure arrangements whereby air transport was organised to connect with the arrival and departure of ships.

This powerful speech by a member of such practical experience aroused intense interest and was supported strongly by Lord Derby. The resolution was carried and at the next meeting the council sanctioned a civil aviation committee with Mr. Thornton as chairman and with representatives from the Chamber, from the Liverpool Organisation and from the Shipowners' Association. The March, 1929, issue of the *Liverpool Trade Review* included a map of the European air services, showing the remarkable coverage which existed twenty years ago. By way of contrast there was an inset showing the services in operation during July, 1920.

The inauguration of an air service linking Liverpool with London and the continental and world routes from Croydon and Paris was hailed as placing Liverpool on the air map. This initial flight by the *City of Coventry* aircraft on 16th June, 1930, and routed via Manchester and Birmingham, provided data on which a time-table was compiled providing three south-bound flights per week leaving Liverpool at 7 a.m. and arriving London (Croydon)

at 9.40 a.m. Similarly the aircraft left Croydon at 5.15 p.m. and arrived at Liverpool at 7.55 p.m.

At the instigation of the Junior Chamber representations were made early in 1933 requesting the Air Ministry and the Liverpool town clerk to provide Customs facilities at Speke airport. It appeared that the matter was under consideration and that although the volume of traffic did not warrant full Customs arrangements it was hoped to provide limited facilities at an early date.

The civil aviation committee dealt with the equipment of Speke airport and advocated the immediate provision of adequate local directional wireless facilities; it requested that a new road should be built giving quicker access to Speke from the city and made practical suggestions for improving the layout of the airport. The council of the Chamber passed a resolution commenting on the absence in the United Kingdom of nationally organised and equipped air routes and urging the Secretary of State for Air to form a committee which would submit a carefully planned system of national air routes. Another resolution urged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to grant a drawback on the duty levied on petroleum spirit consumed in aircraft. In 1936 the civil aviation committee was strengthened by a number of public and private interests nominating their representatives to serve. The Post Office advisory committee was asked to advocate the introduction of late posting facilities for all mail-carrying aircraft leaving the airport. The committee urged upon the Liverpool corporation the necessity of completing the radio beacon installation at Speke. It advocated the publication of reports of official enquiries into accidents to aircraft, and that they should be published soon after the mishap, so that the latter would still be fresh in the public memory. It welcomed the resumption of the air service from Liverpool via Hull to Amsterdam which had been discontinued in the autumn (until then operated by the Royal Dutch Air Line) and which was to recommence with British operators in July, 1936.

All through the following months the committee urged further development of civil aviation through every channel within its reasonable scope. It considered the suggestion that Norwich and Leicester should be linked with Liverpool as ports of call for the Royal Dutch Air Line services and members of the committee attended a civic ceremony at Speke airport in June, 1937, when a new hangar, one of the largest in this country, was opened by Lord Derby. During his speech Lord Derby found difficulty in making himself heard in competition with an aircraft engine which by some misunderstanding was being "revved-up" preparatory to taking-off. After struggling for a few moments his Lordship turned to the platform party and with one of those genial smiles with which he could always charm an audience, he said: "I have been speaking in public for over 50 years; during that time I have learned how to overcome most of the interruptions with which a speaker has to compete. This is the first time I have had to fight against the exhaust of an aircraft, and, gentlemen, I GIVE IT UP!"

The civil aviation committee paid an official visit to Speke airport on 25th April, 1938. Amongst other matters to which attention was given at this time were the Manx airway section of the Railway Air Services, the Blackpool and West Coast Air Services, and questions arising from the Hull-Doncaster-Manchester air service operated by the North Eastern Railway.

Events in 1939 having brought an end to the activities of the civil aviation committee, a new body known as the air transport committee took its place after the war, with the original committee's full approval and support. This new committee had the old one as its basis, but by virtue of its title and constitution embraced a wider representation of air transport users: and immediately on its formation, plans were made for resuming activity. Amongst other matters considered in 1946 were the extent to which helicopters could be used, lack of accommodation at Speke airport, and aircraft chartering terms. The com-

mittee also accomplished much useful spade work in pressing for an expansion of air services from Liverpool, while in matters of detail it dealt with indicator signs to the airport bus, and the despatch of parcels by air.

The road transport section, in 1939, received advice about the organisation of road transport for defence emergency, followed later by details of charges and conditions subsequent to September 1939, amongst these being the Drivers' Hours Order (Defence Regulations 1939), fuel rationing, and various other matters of high importance at that time. During 1940 this section dealt with nineteen different questions, almost every single one having an influence upon members' own businesses and the national war effort.

The Chamber collaborated with the Merseyside Industrial Traffic Consultative Committee about the staggering of working hours during the black-out, particularly as a means of relieving pressure on available transport facilities. The transport committee examined aspects of the hauliers' national traffic pool scheme, endeavoured to persuade the railway company to study the convenience of passengers on disembarking from the train due at 9.46 p.m. at Lime Street from Euston, carefully considered the question of car-parking in city streets, the nationalisation of road transport, erection of shelters for bus and tram queues, sign-posting of the East Lancashire road, and inadequate sleeping berth facilities in the Euston train.

The road transport section devoted attention to eighteen topics of major importance during 1942, amongst those being vehicle depreciation allowances, new vehicles and spare parts, and the Government road haulage scheme. During the following year, members were given detailed information about the Ministry of War Transport's scheme for the organisation and direction of long-distance road haulage. This the section resolved to keep continually under review. Later, co-operation was invited from all members to secure the utmost economy in the use of rubber tyres.

In 1945 the road transport section sent a strongly-worded resolution (endorsed by the council) to the Ministry of War Transport and to Members of Parliament affirming that Government control must always be prejudicial to the operation of road transport as required by commerce and industry, and demanding immediate de-requisition. In 1948 another phase of transport developed into a section, namely the private hire car section, which immediately on its formation dealt with irregularities in the petrol allocations, minimum charges for private hire cars, and bye-laws affecting private hire cars and hackney carriages. As petrol shortages continued to hamper members in the use of their private cars this section has proved of considerable value in protecting the interests of car hire operators and also ensuring that the general public should have the most efficient service of hired cars consistent with the difficulties caused by petrol rationing, absence of spare parts, and lack of skilled personnel for maintenance and major overhauls.

Amongst more recently constituted organisations directly affiliated to the Chamber is one devoted to improving the amenities of Merseyside and of educating its population to a higher appreciation of citizenship. Inaugurated at a special meeting in April, 1938, with the Lord Mayor as chairman and supported by many leading citizens including the Bishop of Liverpool and the president of the Guild of Undergraduates, this society—the Merseyside Civic Society—has as its object:—to render such services in the city of Liverpool, the boroughs of Bootle, Bebington, Birkenhead, Crosby, and Wallasey, and the urban districts of Litherland, and Huyton-with-Roby, and adjacent districts, as are calculated to stimulate civic interest and responsibility with a view to (a) increasing and developing the public amenities of Merseyside, and (b) preserving buildings and monuments of historic worth and places of natural beauty.

Although inaugurated just before the outbreak of war, the society achieved much work of real value prior to 1939. It carried out a survey of field paths on Merseyside, commenced a film “It Began on Merseyside,” organised a

competition for designs in street furniture, and presented trees for planting in residential areas. One might have anticipated that, despite this promising start, war's outbreak would have extinguished the newly-formed body, but with the practical assistance of Sir Sydney Jones the society swiftly found new avenues of service, and as a result the people of Merseyside lived a happier and fuller life during the trying war years. It formed the Merseyside Council for Hospitality, which translated into concrete terms something of the warm-hearted welcome which Lancashire people always feel, if they do not always show, towards strangers. It built up a series of musical entertainments which became one of the strongest attractions that Merseyside could have offered to servicemen and wartime personnel; and it undertook useful exploratory work for C.E.M.A.

The society has been singularly fortunate in obtaining the practical interest of distinguished citizens. The late Viscount Leverhulme served as chairman during a difficult period; and since the society's inauguration, the late Earl of Derby displayed deep interest in all its activities. And today, when the emphasis lies so much upon youth, it is highly satisfactory to record that the present Earl of Derby holds office as president.

At its eighty-ninth annual general meeting on Monday, 1st May, 1939, the Chamber dealt with matters global in scope, and more varied in detail than those which occupied its attention during the corresponding meeting in 1914. But here the parallel ends; for while at the pre-war meeting in 1914 not the faintest zephyr hinted at the war clouds so soon to break, the 1939 meeting opened with a frank recognition of increased international tension and an open admission that this not only dominated world thought to the exclusion of more normal themes but already had resulted in a detrimental, dislocating, and at times a devastating effect upon commerce throughout the world. The president's opening address contained many highly significant passages amongst which may be quoted:

“Economic progress, with its inexorable necessity, has been frustrated and the trading position weakened. The atmosphere throughout, but with increased intensity since September, has been one of tension, crisis, and apprehension, with security threatened on every side. The year has seen the unfolding of a new policy in Europe and the Far East; the expansion of territorial frontiers by aggression, based on military power, combined with a dictation of economic relationships. This is without parallel in the scheme or history of modern civilisation. Conditions in Europe, the cradle of modern civilisation, have very nearly reverted to barbarism in which the weak are denied safety or liberty, and persons and peoples have become subjected to insufferable intolerance and oppression. The expansion of such a lamentable condition of affairs has resulted in the effort and capacity of nations being turned urgently from trade to the production of armaments. Nations threatened or in expectation of being threatened are standing to arms and are endeavouring to reach agreement to arrest further aggression and so persuade the world to resolve again into a condition of security and peace, even if that be an armed peace. Great Britain throughout has taken, with France, a leading part in the attempt to avoid what has at times appeared to be an unavoidable consequence of the prevailing state of affairs, the outbreak of another world war. The policy first to be followed was one of appeasement. This failed for reasons still present in the minds of all.

“The new policy is one of rallying to the cause of peace such nations as may fear for their continued autonomy. The result of this effort to throw a barrier against aggression has involved Britain in a series of commitments on the Continent of Europe far exceeding in scope anything previously undertaken and these must necessarily have a significant bearing on future questions of finance and taxation. Although no effort has been left undone by the democratic countries, including the

United States of America, to stem the tide of bitterness and suspicion, little success has so far been achieved in bridging the gap between what seemingly is an implacable divergence of policies and understanding. Confidence has been ruthlessly overthrown . . . Japan continues its armed penetration into China . . . Palestine is in a state of grave political disorder . . .

"Such is the background against which world trade has attempted to prosper. That despite such a state of affairs it should have succeeded in maintaining a fair volume is surprising. It is not unreasonable to believe that its moderate success tends to show that there exists a latent necessity to return to trade to meet the ever-growing needs of all peoples. That if the efforts of nations could be released from the obsession of armaments the world would speedily enter into a period of great commercial expansion and that, freed from the long sustained negation of normal trade, business enterprise would attain widespread activity and prosperity . . . it seems clear and incontrovertible that if the prodigious expenditure on armaments continues and the technique of trade and finance is frustrated without intermission, the world's machinery for trading will become so disorganised that nations will be thrown into a state of acute distress and desperation . . . currencies are accordingly with difficulty maintained, and purchasing power and social improvement and progress the world over are depressed. The elementary practice of barter is being extended to meet a deficit in the normal accumulations of currency with a consequent restriction of the opportunity for trading on orthodox lines. The limitation of the usefulness of barter to meet the requirements of modern civilisation marks the development as one which cannot usefully be extended indefinitely or maintained with impunity.

"In the midst of all this turmoil it is only to be expected that British overseas trade has shown a contraction. Both imports and exports have been reduced,

the former by a greater margin than the latter. Some of our key exports, however, notably textiles and coal, have shown an unwelcome further reduction . . . The need for greater efforts to extend overseas trade, accordingly, becomes more imperative. A tendency, observable in some directions, to relinquish the struggle to maintain contact with overseas markets and to benefit from the easier and more accessible home market, is one which is continuing and must react seriously and permanently on the nation's economic and financial position as a whole. The Government is showing, somewhat tardily perhaps, a better appreciation of the position and efforts to stimulate greater interest, opportunity and confidence are being promoted . . . Our vital industry, shipping, continues to bear the full brunt of the depressed and inequitable conditions . . . Although the Port of Liverpool has shown a most gratifying expansion in activity, this favourable position has not been extended to the general commercial life of the city. Some reflection of the short engagement of the commercial machinery of the city may be gained from the knowledge that the Liverpool bank clearing in 1938 fell by as much as £86,000,000 compared with 1937, a decline of 24·3 per cent. . . . if then, the high pitch of events in Europe quiets, the dark phase of insecurity may as quickly be dispersed as the elements which gathered with such concentrated force to cause it. Political waywardness has its own limitations.

“In looking for the opportunity to return to an untrammelled pursuit of peaceful avocations we may, perhaps, find not unreasonable encouragement and hope in the words of the Prime Minister, Mr. Neville Chamberlain. In announcing to the House of Commons on 13th April, 1939, the further extension of our responsibilities in Europe, he said ‘Once again there has been brought home to us all the intolerable nature of the state of things which keeps the whole world in a perpetually recurring series of alarms, affecting commerce

and industry, depressing social life and culture and poisoning every phase of human activity in every country. We have exercised patience for a long period in spite of many disappointments in our efforts to remove suspicion and promote goodwill and keep the peace. I am unwilling to believe that these efforts will not yet bear fruit, however discouraging the outlook may seem at the moment.' "

These passages have been quoted at length because even in 1950, even after all the strange paradoxes which commerce and industry experienced during the "shooting war" and during the "cold war" that followed and continues to this day, it would be difficult to find a more statesmanlike review of events leading up to September, 1939, or a clearer indication of the hopes and fears of the commercial community voiced by a Chamber of Commerce uniquely equipped—by reason of its location, contacts, and broad experience in almost every sphere of industry and commerce—to deal with whatever it should be, war or peace. As for the first, the Chamber took further steps to disseminate information of value to industrialists and owners of business and commercial premises with regard to air raid risks and air raid precautions. Detailed information was also made available about compensation for death or injury suffered by air raid precaution workers; the responsibility of employers under the Workmen's Compensation Act and at common law in respect of injury to workpeople engaged in air raid precautions. As for the second, a delegation from the Chamber attended an International Chamber of Commerce congress at Copenhagen and supported a resolution urging that certain governments including Britain, Germany, Italy and Japan

"each collaborate with their leading business men in a thorough study of the economic and fiscal condition of their individual countries with respect to their national needs and their possible contribution to the world's economic development, and that when these

countries shall have completed their surveys their economic experts should meet for the purpose of formulating a plan of adjustment which will give all countries of the world a fair opportunity to share in the resources of the world."

CHAPTER NINE

War comes again—1941 Annual report destroyed—
War-time activities—Post-war planning.

LIKE SO many other organisations which depend upon peace throughout the world for their rightful development and for providing the services for which they exist, the Liverpool Chamber found itself faced by unpredictable conditions after the declaration of war in 1939. With the fury of battle raging in Europe, and with the civilian population expecting new forms of aerial warfare, it would have been obviously purposeless to follow precedent. The titanic struggle in which commerce and the nation were engaged transcended anything previously conceived or encountered, and although the future was regarded as being unpredictable, yet the Chamber did make one prophecy which, unfortunately, proved to be accurate:

“Whether victory comes soon or late, we shall not emerge unscarred and unscathed. Neither will the entire world and its economy.”

Despite much preoccupation in considering war risks, in organising air-raid precautions, and in adapting the business of each member to conform to war-time conditions, the Chamber found time to investigate the position insofar as there might be want of co-ordination between the various chambers of commerce in Lancashire. These enquiries disclosed that there existed an eager desire to allow Lancashire to speak with a common voice, and to be assisted in taking a proper share in the direction of the trade and commerce of the country. A meeting was therefore organised, attended by representatives of the Liverpool Chamber, the Manchester Chamber and representatives of the Lancashire Chambers of Commerce Committee, when it was unanimously resolved that to cope with the existing position it was necessary to establish a

closer and more highly organised relationship between bodies representing the commercial and industrial opinion of the county. Therefore, the chairman was authorised to arrange a scheme for sharing, examining and collating common experience in commercial difficulties and for endowing recommendations for their solution with the positive effect of concerted action.

From this resolution there merged the Lancashire Chambers of Commerce Central Committee, authorised to hold regular meetings to discuss problems of common interest and to initiate whatever policies and actions as might be required. For instance, joint action was taken in connection with the import and export trade, and a letter addressed to the Prime Minister urging the appointment of a Cabinet Minister to undertake a proper and adequate direction of the nation's economic effort in war time.

The council of the Chamber issued an appeal to members asking them to support the National Savings movement, the Red Cross penny-a-week fund, and the Lord Mayor of Liverpool's war fund. This appeal gathered force when it became known that the Chamber by its articles of association was precluded from contributing to objects outside the promotion of its established purposes. The annual dinner of the Chamber was omitted and also the usual reception to the Liverpool Consular Corps, although the Chamber entertained the Minister of Food, the Right Hon. Lord Woolton, to luncheon: during his visit the Minister discussed with representatives of the trade associations affiliated to the Chamber and with leading members of trade sections some of the problems connected with the import, control, distribution and price of foodstuffs. The Chamber, through its general trade committee, dealt with valuation for duty purposes, war risks insurance, civil defence and emergency organisation, debts outstanding from foreign countries, expenditure by Government departments, and the purchase tax in the Budget proposals, 1940.

The annual report for 1941 having been prepared in the usual way, set-up, and printed, the secretary had made

arrangements for its distribution when, as the result of enemy action, the whole of this work, as well as stocks of paper and facilities for binding, were completely destroyed in the printing shop. The council did not think that, in view of the shortage of labour and scarcity of materials and printing equipment in the Liverpool area, it was desirable to reprint the whole issue. Consequently the report appeared in a much abridged form, doing little more than apologising for and explaining its lamentably incomplete nature and giving the general headings of each subject with which the committees dealt during the year. For instance, the general trade committee's report consisted of less than one page and yet listed twenty-five headings, all indicating important subjects with which the committee had dealt. Full reports of each committee's work for the year, however, survived enemy action in their typescript form and are preserved in the Chamber's archives.

In 1941 and 1942, the Chamber advocated an extension of banking hours, which had been restricted on war's outbreak; it dealt with industrial and civic reconstruction, transport of workers and the staggering of working hours, women in industry, employment for retired Army officers, and part-time employment on war production. At this time, the Board of Trade, seeking constructive suggestions for planning during the post-war era, issued a questionnaire which the Chamber felt premature, particularly as neither the naval nor the military operations of the war had progressed sufficiently to enable any balanced assessment to be made of the conditions affecting world economy which would prevail in the unknown post-war period.

The Chamber's monthly magazine, the *Liverpool Trade Review*, in its issue of June, 1941, apologised for a change in format and continued:

"We offer our deep sympathy to all who have been compelled to seek pastures new, or at least to find an address from which to conduct their business. The *Review* missed its step . . . and no publication was made

in May. We are here again, and even if the original galleon on the cover was sunk, it has been replaced by a vessel in even better trim and with a fair breeze which we hope will carry us through till victory."

The Chamber appointed a sub-committee for the sole purpose of keeping under review the proposals embodied in the Uthwatt report on compensation and betterment as related to land. The council of the Chamber withheld its views on the Beveridge report on social insurance and allied services, as the Association of British Chambers of Commerce had submitted a memorandum in which the views of the national commercial community were set out in detail. Neither the council of the Chamber nor the association condemned the Beveridge report outright; on the contrary, they not only admitted, but admired, its best points, finally declaring the Beveridge plan to be an ideal with much to commend it and expressing the hope that something should be done to ascertain how it could be brought near to practical adoption as soon as circumstances permitted. During this year, the general trade committee concentrated to some extent on local affairs, such as delays in loading and distributing goods, the secondary schools' curriculum, f.o.b. shipments, excess profits tax, amalgamation of small businesses, club or check trading, and the War Damage Act, 1941.

At the annual general meeting in June, 1943, the president, Lord Derby, announced for the second time his desire to retire from the presidency of the Chamber, and in a resolution passed unanimously the council stated that it had no alternative but to accept this resignation, at the same time placing on record its deep appreciation of the long and valued services rendered by Lord Derby to the Chamber. By virtue of Lord Derby's unique position in the country and the affection in which he was held by the county, it was felt that no one could be invited to occupy this high office meantime. Consequently the office of president remained open during the next few years.

At this period, a halfway stage in war's progress, as it

were, the Chamber ingeniously and successfully adopted a three-point policy. It maintained and occasionally extended its peace-time services to the commercial community: it geared itself, more or less directly, with every worthwhile war effort, especially with defence: and it kept in close contact with many widely differing proposals aimed at ensuring a brighter, better Liverpool in the post-war era.

With better news from the overseas battlefronts and more optimism amongst the civilian population at home, there arose a wide diversity of subjects, current and post-war, all demanding the Chamber's close consideration, amongst these being post-war air transport, the control of industry, licensing of traders, reform of the foreign service, company law amendment, pay-as-you-earn income tax scheme, re-employment of Service men and women after the war, and general commercial policy. Later these pressing problems were augmented by still wider ones, each of which affected more or less directly the activities as well as the future of all members; these included the country's agricultural policy, nationalisation of gas and electricity, road transport, town and country planning, national health insurance, the commercial motor show, the economic crises, the fuel crisis, civic week in Liverpool, export research, the cotton industry, the economic survey, and radar in the Port of Liverpool.

In common with other bodies the Chamber received innumerable invitations to express its views, and to participate in discussion and to contribute to the post-war schemes sponsored by Government departments and public authorities. The Chamber had an outline of how the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board proposed to reconstruct the dock estate during the years 1944 to 1947, the chief objects being to give easier access, quicker turn-round, and better storage facilities. The Chamber's general trade committee, having asked for an early and more comprehensive declaration of Government policy on demobilisation and reinstatement of Service personnel after the war, heard an extract from an Army officer's letter

stating that "this feeling of having nothing to return to after the war is indeed of great concern to us fellows out here, and causes us a great deal of worry." The committee agreed that the four primary points in demobilisation (as distinct from the Government's "first in, first out" proposals) were: Whether men had jobs to which to return, whether employers required these men to return, length of service, and family considerations. These views were forwarded to the Government with a strong recommendation for early consideration.

In preparation for post-war requirements the Liverpool College of Commerce, in collaboration with the Institute of Export, arranged an intensive course for students desiring to train for executive posts. The Chamber, through the Association of British Chambers, presented the views of trade and industry on taxation problems to the Chancellor of the Exchequer when framing his Budget proposals; an illuminating series of articles on cotton (although headed "Cotton Statistics" the practical information therein must have proved even more valuable than the statistics) by Comtelburo kept members right up to date in this important sphere; informative reports of meetings of the Liverpool Steam Ship Owners' Association appeared in the *Liverpool Trade Review* and recommendations for dealing with dock congestion, for encouraging the export trade and for resettlement of ex-Servicemen.

A new committee having been formed to co-ordinate opinion on developments affecting Liverpool commercial interests, and particularly to meet the conditions anticipated after the war, the Chamber received a request from the city council asking for this committee's assistance in formulating plans and recommendations for the post-war development of Liverpool.

"The Post-war Development of Liverpool"! The very atmosphere seemed to vibrate with speeches and discussions about development schemes, building plans, reconstruction blue-prints, and innumerable suggestions—some perfectly and ludicrously Utopian—for utilising bombed sites and

blitzed buildings. It appears that most of those grand proposals have been consigned to pigeon-holes in Lancashire or in London. One large manufacturing firm of international repute, out of sheer philanthropy and anxiety to make a contribution to the bright, new "post-war future" produced a film, "When we Build Again." Then, later on, inspired by a continuance of this idealism, the firm equipped a vehicle with projectors, screen, loud-speaker and operator which toured the camps and Service centres in Liverpool and Wirral showing this film as an indication of the comforts and joys awaiting the Service man on demobilisation. Alas! The film made no allowance for the housing policy adopted by the Government returned in 1945, so that scores of thousands of the men who had hoped to own a house by 1946 or 1947 find themselves still living with relatives or complete strangers in 1950 and likely to have to do so for a considerable period.

The Chamber felt that unnecessary restrictions and controls stifled individuality and frustrated enterprise in almost every direction, but the chairman expressed himself confident that the end of the war would allow private enterprise full scope. He stated: "I look forward to the post-war period as a time when private enterprise will be given every encouragement." In explaining his views about exports, the chairman quoted the (then) Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir John Anderson, who said "... it will be indispensable for us to increase our exports—that will be a matter of life and death to us." Thus, in 1944, Sir John Anderson provided a text from which successive Chancellors have preached ever since, not only with monotonous regularity, but with unfailing monotony. Sir John continued: "The Government cannot make export trade; what the Government can do is to try to make conditions in which export trade can flourish." This, however, did not make such an appropriate basis for Ministerial sermons, especially as the Government not only claimed credit for the rapidly mounting export trade (as witness its frequent use of the first person, singular and

plural, in Cabinet Ministers' speeches and in economic surveys) but tended and still tends to place obstacles in the path of every patriotic firm honestly striving to add to the volume of export trade.

Of the many blunt truths expressed by members in connection with development schemes, one by Mr. Dan Tobey, J.P., chairman of the commercial policy committee, merits quotation. He emphasised:

"... the necessity of impressing upon the planners that, in order to have a beautiful city, there has to be the wherewithal to pay for its upkeep and maintenance. Unless the commerce of the port is maintained and unless trade controls and restrictions are drastically modified and eventually withdrawn, this will be very difficult."

The Chamber organised a public meeting on 9th October, 1944, attended by over 400 representatives of companies and firms on Merseyside and by three Members of Parliament, with the object of discussing Government proposals for war damage payments. After lengthy discussion it was decided to forward a three-point resolution demanding immediate action on lines approved by the meeting, to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Minister of Reconstruction, the Minister of Town and Country Planning, the chairman of the War-Damage Commission and all M.P.s for Liverpool and district.

The question of resuscitating the Junior Chamber of Commerce, established in 1931 at the request of Lord Derby, received careful consideration towards the end of 1944; and the first annual general meeting of the junior body since 1940 took place in April, 1945. The council of the Chamber hoped that all members would encourage their administrative staffs to join the junior body and take an active part in its affairs. By 1948, the Junior Chamber had reached a membership of over 150 and from July, 1948, its activities were regularly publicised in the *Liverpool Trade Review*.

That the commercial community felt grave anxiety about Liverpool's whole future becomes evident as one recollects

the conference organised by the Civic Society in association with the *Liverpool Daily Post*. Afterwards the proprietors of the latter published a booklet, *Merseyside of the Future*, based on the findings of the conference and summarised in the January, 1945, issue of the *Liverpool Trade Review*. This dealt with attracting industries to Merseyside, a Merseyside Development Association, a Merseyside Industrial Association, publicity, transport facilities, small factories, increased electrification, the Mersey Tunnel, a central bus station, express roads, airport, and transport between rail terminals.

In 1944 the Chamber suffered a heavy loss in the death of Mr. Stephen Wilson, after a period of service commencing in 1924 as deputy assistant secretary, then as assistant secretary, 1927, joint secretary, 1929, and secretary, 1942, and editor of the *Liverpool Trade Review* from 1924 to 1944. One of the tributes to him read: "No one could have asked for a more efficient officer, a happier companion, or a more lovable friend." At the annual general meeting in June the chairman, having paid tribute to Mr. Wilson and his fine work for the Chamber, continued:

"Almost a year ago today Mr. John E. Nicholson took over the whole work on the secretarial side. He has proved of great assistance to me personally, and I am sure you will agree that he has carried on the work of the Chamber most capably."

In attempting to portray even briefly those months preceding V.E.-Day one finds strange and unsuspected difficulties; but not, be it said, on account of any shortage of facts or material which exist in ample measure and in infinite detail. It is the spirit that in some indefinable manner completely eludes and defines recapture. It may be that men who lived through these paradoxical times, with comparative peace in Liverpool and V-2 weapons dealing destruction and death along the South Coast and in London, cannot stand back and view events as an on-looker would see them. Sufficient, then, to record that war's end brought more rather than fewer problems to be

faced by the commercial community. Even today the glories and joys of peace have eluded mankind's grasp; and although during the war it became usual to exhort people to make certain that we would "win the peace," we have still to do so.

CHAPTER TEN

Liverpool and Industrial Merseyside—New secretary appointed—Death of Lord Derby—New president elected.

AT THE ninety-fifth annual general meeting on 1st June, 1945, the chairman referred to "the stirring events of the month which has just ended," and stated it was the first time for six years "when all members had an opportunity of meeting together without the shadow of war clouding the European horizon." He looked forward to a speedy end to the hostilities in the Far East. Then, just as the Chamber published a guide to Liverpool trade and commerce after the First World War, so there followed after the Second World War a comprehensive volume, *Liverpool and Industrial Merseyside*, intended mainly for export, and basically designed to emphasise the importance of Merseyside as an industrial area.

In February, 1946, the chairman intimated that after 200 applications had been received for the post of secretary to the Chamber, and after these had been methodically reduced to twenty, a selection committee interviewed personally the eight most suitable, and unanimously recommended that Lieut-Col. P. G. R. Burford, T.D., M.A., be appointed. Col. Burford, a qualified solicitor and partner in a well-known London firm until war's outbreak, was second-in-command of the Artists Rifles on embodiment and served during the war with the Rifle Brigade and subsequently with the Allied Military Mission to the French Government; he was awarded the Croix de Guerre, the United States Bronze Star and was mentioned in despatches. The chairman referred to Mr. John E. Nicholson's "loyalty, perseverance and hard work since the lamented death of Mr. Wilson."

Following Sir Stafford Cripps's statement in the House of

Commons on 18th March, 1946, announcing that bulk buying of raw cotton would continue, the Chamber organised a large meeting of responsible citizens (in all, three meetings were held, morning, 1 p.m., and afternoon), on 26th March; a full account of the proceedings appeared in the April issue of the *Liverpool Trade Review*. Despite all the logical reasoning based on practical experience, and despite further meetings held on 27th and 28th March and 2nd and 3rd April, and despite all the Chamber's subsequent efforts to restore this "most Liverpool of all Liverpool activities," the Government's attitude all along has been one of stubborn resistance to every suggestion that the Liverpool Cotton Market should revert to its former structure and status. No one can ever attempt to estimate the loss economically and in prestige suffered by Liverpool (and indeed by the Empire) as a result of this example of placing party before national prosperity.

At the ninety-sixth annual general meeting the chairman, in referring to the Chamber's work, stated:

"It (the Chamber) certainly needs to advance. Its membership and authority should be greater than they are . . . it is an obvious truism that if you want to attract more members, you must make membership more attractive. Our officials, now that their numbers permit some slight relief from purely routine duties, are tackling this problem with great keenness."

Referring to bulk buying of cotton by the Government, the chairman stated:

"Your Chamber remains of the opinion that the (Government) decision was not in the best interest of a nation as widely dependent on international commercial goodwill as we are. Moreover, bulk buying . . . leads inevitably to bulk selling and, where primary products are concerned, the bulk seller must ultimately win, for the simple reason that it is he who grows the crop—or not, as he chooses . . . since I am an adherent of no political party, I may be acquitted of partisanship

if I suggest that the whole incident was a classic example of how not to govern, or at least how not to govern well."

A year later the chairman stated:

"The year 1946 will be memorable for the decision of the Government to continue the centralized purchase of cotton. We have now the bitter experience of knowing what that has meant for Liverpool. The closure of the Liverpool Cotton Market has caused untold hardship to hundreds of people and their families, and has resulted in calamity for men of expert knowledge and experience, many of whom served through the war and held positions of trust and responsibility . . . for them, there is no longer useful employment."

The *Liverpool Trade Review*, in January, 1947, published its usual list of the Liverpool Consular Corps, an annual feature and one of considerable value to the commercial community. In February, the same journal gave a most informative outline of the Town and Country Planning Bill, 1947. Among items on the council's agenda appeared tyre shortage, Cotton (Centralised Buying) Bill, Transport Bill, Statistics of Trade Bill, Companies Bill, Electricity Bill, and the Industrial Organisation Bill.

In April there appeared a graph showing how the membership had increased by over 220 between January, 1946, and May, 1947, indicating that the larger the membership, the better the service available for every individual comprising the commercial community.

Special meetings were held dealing with the fuel and economic crises, how best to enter the American market, and Liverpool re-development. Reports were published dealing with the Transport Bill, the Industrial Organisation Bill, British trade prospects in Central, South and East Europe, education for commerce, and the International Chamber of Commerce congress at Montreux. The Chamber expressed its views frankly and at some length on the economic survey for 1947, the economic crisis, and exports in reference to the economic crisis.

On 1st January, 1948, the *Liverpool Daily Post* published

an article "Challenge of the New Year" by the Secretary of the Chamber (reported in the January issue of the *Liverpool Trade Review*) indicating how Merseyside might lead the way back to freedom, sanity and prosperity.

Soon afterwards came the sad news of Lord Derby's death. Col. Buckley's fine tribute to the Chamber's president, from 1910 to 1943, forms a poignant page in the *Liverpool Trade Review* of February. Truly Liverpool and the Empire must be the poorer for his passing: but Liverpool and the Empire must admit themselves as immeasurably richer for his magnificent example in selfless service, so frequently rendered at great personal inconvenience, and for his steadfast courage during the last few years when he regretfully spoke and wrote of "the twilight of my life."

During 1948, the council dealt with the five-day week, spare parts for pre-war vehicles, salvage, attracting visitors to the British Industries Fair, road vehicle delays, car parking, barley products, national insurance, teleprinter paper, and Customs Bill of Entry. The *Liverpool Trade Review* published special articles on the National Insurance Act, 1946, the export merchant, the Town and Country Planning Act, oil as a large scale industry, plastics in shipping, trade with Spain, and the commercial motor show. The Chamber expressed its views at considerable length on taxation, the pilot census of distribution, and the control of development under the Town and Country Planning Act. The views of the Associated Chambers of Commerce were placed before members, particularly with reference to taxation. The Liverpool Steam Ship Owners' Association contributed its usual comprehensive survey of the shipping outlook, dealing with export figures, the Merchant Navy, and the economic crisis. The Junior Chamber presented a promising report following the retiring chairman's challenge to commerce and industry "to fight every inch of the way against a negative policy of restriction."

After thorough overhaul and re-organisation the

Chamber's library underwent re-indexing and enlarging so that it would be ready to meet all calls likely to be made upon it at a time when the commercial community required accurate and immediate information upon matters not likely to be available elsewhere. The main headings under which information is grouped are commerce, law and Government administration, economics and statistics, and communications. Members were invited to use the library to its utmost and to inform the secretary of any direction in which the library failed to provide the requisite data. The Chamber indicated its desire to make this library a service of considerable value to members, and invited suggestions as to how that service could be improved. The development of the library followed quite naturally on the increase of staff, mentioned earlier in these pages, and on the release of the chief officials from routine duties so that they might undertake duties of a more constructive character.

At the ninety-eighth annual general meeting the chairman, referring to Major the Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, M.C., D.L., stated:

"The respect, I might even say the affection, of the Liverpool Chamber for the House of Stanley is now rewarded with a youthful leader for a period in which youth must be called upon to play an ever-increasing and responsible part . . . that Lord Derby is willing to accept our presidency and thus follow the example of his grandfather is not only an honour to this Chamber but also is of inestimable value to the city of Liverpool."

The Lord Mayor expressed on behalf of the citizens of Liverpool the pleasure of the city in Lord Derby's acceptance of the presidency and the strengthening of the links between Liverpool and the House of Stanley.

Lord Derby, in reply, said that to very few men fell the honour that had fallen on him. There were three reasons why he accepted the office. Firstly, because he believed it was the greatest possible tribute the Chamber could have paid to his grandfather, who was president for so long.

Secondly, his acceptance of the office would allay any doubt, if any were still in doubt, as to his intention to remain in Lancashire and to do his very best to continue his grandfather's work. Thirdly, nothing could be a greater encouragement to him in the very hard task, for one of his age, of following in his grandfather's footsteps in the years to come.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Centenary Celebrations—Town Hall reception—Commemoration dinner—Service at Liverpool Cathedral.

WITH APPROPRIATE dignity and civic splendour the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce celebrated its centenary during the first few days of February 1950: sharing in those celebrations were a number of distinguished visitors each one of whom brought to the occasion an added brilliance. Seldom, if ever, in Liverpool's long history had the city shown its outstanding features to so many national, and indeed international, personages within a brief four days. Amongst the countries represented were Canada, the United States of America, France, and Denmark.

The main events, which brought new emphasis to Liverpool as a city of world-importance, included a reception by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Liverpool (Alderman J. J. Cleary and Mrs. Cleary) at the Town Hall, a dinner at the Adelphi Hotel at which the president of the Chamber, the Earl of Derby, presided, the guest speakers being the Marquess of Salisbury, K.G., Sir Henry Cohen, M.D., F.R.S.P., F.F.R., J.P., Mr. Cameron F. Cobbold, Governor of the Bank of England, Mr. John McLean, C.B.E., president, Association of British Chambers of Commerce, and the Lord Mayor: a service at Liverpool Cathedral when the Lord Mayor attended in state and the Archbishop of York, Dr. Cyril Garbett, preached the sermon.

Members of the Chamber and their guests made a tour of the Dock Estate and were entertained to luncheon by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, while the ladies accompanying the principal guests visited Birkenhead Town Hall, Bidston Observatory, and the Merseyside Film Institute Society's theatre; visits were also paid by members

to the factories of the Automatic Telephone & Electric Co. Ltd., J. Bibby & Sons Ltd., British Insulated Callender's Cables Ltd., Dunlop Rubber Co. Ltd., Imperial Tobacco Co. Ltd. (Ogden Branch) and Lever Bros. (Port Sunlight) Ltd. On Friday 3rd February over six hundred guests, members of the Chamber and their friends, were received at Liverpool Town Hall by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, and by the chairman of the Chamber, Mr. E. A. G. Caröe with Mrs. W. S. S. Hannay, wife of the immediate past chairman. The guests included: Mr. Cameron F. Cobbold (Governor of the Bank of England) and Lady Hermione Cobbold, Mr. John McLean (president of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce) and Mrs. McLean, Mr. Frank Bower (chairman, Finance and Taxation Committee, Association of British Chambers of Commerce) and Mrs. Bower, Mr. J. R. K. Tyre (chairman, Overseas Committee, Association of British Chambers of Commerce) and Mrs. Tyre, Mr. Wallace B. Phillips (president, American Chamber of Commerce in London), Mr. Keith Trevor (first vice-president, British Chamber of Commerce in France), Mr. E. Mackenzie Hay (president, British Federation of Commodity & Allied Trade Associations Ltd.) and Mrs. Mackenzie Hay, Mr. Chr. D. T. Saugman (president, British Import Union, Copenhagen).

Members of the executive of the Chamber present, in addition to the president and chairman, included Mr. Bertram Nelson (vice-chairman), Mr. R. C. de Zouche (hon. treasurer) and Mrs. de Zouche, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur D. Dean, Sir Henry and Lady Hancock, Mr. and Mrs. D. S. Inman, Mr. Frank Irving, Mr. and Mrs. F. Huth Jackson, Mr. and Mrs. A. Claude Morrell and Major and Mrs. R. H. Thornton.

With its lovely Regency furniture, priceless silver and historic portraits, the Town Hall of Liverpool presented a brilliant spectacle, thronged by so many of the city's leading personalities with their wives, and accompanied by other important personages who had come to honour with their presence the city and the Chamber's centenary.

All the guests, citizens as well as visitors, voiced their warmest appreciation of the Lord Mayor's and Lady Mayoress's hospitality and kindness in displaying so many of Liverpool's treasures. The presence of the president of the Chamber added lustre to the already illustrious gathering.

On Saturday 4th February the Chamber held its centenary dinner at the Adelphi Hotel, with the Earl of Derby in the chair. Official guests and a representative gathering of the Chamber's members filled the Derby suite to its maximum. In addition to the guest speakers, the guests included: His Grace the Lord Archbishop of York, the Rt. Hon. and Most Rev. Cyril Forster Garbett, P.C., D.D.; the Lord Bishop of Liverpool, the Rt. Rev. C. A. Martin, D.D.; His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Liverpool, the Most Rev. Richard Downey, D.D., Ph.D., LL.D., all of whom sat at the top table with the officers of the Chamber, the guest speakers and a number of past chairmen of the Chamber. The following guests were also present:—Mr. T. Alker (Town Clerk of Liverpool); Mr. G. C. Allen (regional secretary, North-Western Region, Federation of British Industries); Col. J. G. B. Beazley, M.C., T.D., D.L., J.P. (deputy chairman, Mersey Docks and Harbour Board); Mr. H. G. Bennett, M.Sc. (chairman, Liverpool Branch, National Union of Manufacturers); Mr. Frank Bower, C.B.E., M.A. (chairman, Finance and Taxation Committee, Association of British Chambers of Commerce); Mr. K. J. Brizell (secretary to the Lord Mayor of Liverpool); Mr. E. A. Carpenter, O.B.E., J.P. (president, Manchester Chamber of Commerce); Mr. F. H. Cave (deputy general manager and secretary, Mersey Docks and Harbour Board); Mr. J. C. Crawford, J.P. (president, Widnes Chamber of Commerce); Mr. J. Eccles, C.B.E. (chairman, Merseyside and North Wales Electricity Board); Mr. E. Mackenzie Hay (president, British Federation of Commodity and Allied Trade Associations Ltd.); Mr. John Hill (Runcorn and District Chamber of Commerce); Mr. A. H. S. Hinchliffe, D.L., J.P. (deputy president, Association of British Chambers of Commerce);

Sir John Hobhouse, M.C., J.P. (chairman, Incorporated Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine); Mr. J. Fletcher Huddleston (president, Liverpool Consular Corps); Mr. Percival Huffman (president, Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain Inc.); Mr. S. H. Jerrett (chairman, Liverpool Junior Chamber of Commerce); Mr. H. Humphreys Jones, J.P. (president, Liverpool Free Church Council); Rev. J. A. P. Kent (chaplain to the Archbishop of York); Dr. J. F. Mountford, M.A., D.Litt. (Vice-Chancellor, University of Liverpool); Mr. G. A. S. Nairn, M.B.E. (regional chairman, North-Western Region, Federation of British Industries); Mr. Wallace B. Phillips (president, American Chamber of Commerce in London); Lt.-Col. G. S. F. Ritson, T.D., M.A. (director, Lancashire Industrial Development Association); Mr. Chr. D. T. Saugman, C.B.E. (president, British Import Union, Copenhagen), Mr. Keith Trevor (first vice-president, British Chamber of Commerce in France); Mr. J. R. K. Tyre (chairman, Overseas Committee, Association of British Chambers of Commerce); Mr. M. J. Vechsler (Canadian Government Trade Commissioner at Liverpool); Mr. E. Wrayford Willmer, J.P. (chairman, Birkenhead Chamber of Commerce); Sir John Woods, K.C.B., M.V.O. (Permanent Secretary to the Board of Trade); Rabbi S. Woolf, B.A. (Senior Minister, Old Hebrew Congregation).

The loyal toast having been honoured, the president read a message from his Majesty the King: "I sincerely thank all members and guests of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce for their kind and loyal message on the occasion of the centenary dinner and send my best wishes for the Chamber's continued prosperity."

The toast, "The Liverpool Chamber of Commerce," was proposed by the Marquess of Salisbury, and the president responded. The toast, "The future of the City of Liverpool," was in the hands of Sir Henry Cohen, the responder being the Lord Mayor. The chairman of the Chamber, Mr. E. A. G. Carøe, gave the toast, "Our

Guests," to which Mr. Cameron F. Cobbold, Governor of the Bank of England, and Mr. John McLean, president of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, both replied. The text of all the speeches at the banquet, of the sermon preached by the Archbishop of York, and of the secretary's broadcast were reported *verbatim* in the March 1950 issue of the *Liverpool Trade Review*.

On Sunday 5th February members of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, led by their president, formed part of a large congregation of representative citizens gathered to participate in the Chamber's centenary service at Liverpool Cathedral. The Lord Mayor of Liverpool attended in state. After the Ascription of Praise and a hymn, the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Liverpool with the Dean of Liverpool moved to the steps of the choir, whereupon the president, leaving his pew in the congregation, advanced to the steps of the choir and, facing the Archbishop, requested: "Sir, bid a blessing upon this gathering together of members of our Chamber of Commerce, united, as said the first president, for the promotion of trade 'to the common good' and this in loyalty to our Sovereign Lord The King."

Then followed the National Anthem and the benediction by the Lord Bishop of York: "May the Lord Jesus Christ fill you who have come to this centenary celebration with spiritual joy. May His Spirit make you strong and tranquil in the truths of His promises. May the blessing of the Father come upon you abundantly."

After the request there followed the Lesson, read by the Lord Bishop of Liverpool, the Te Deum, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the collects, the anthem, the general thanksgiving, the petitions, and three phrases of the Liverpool Call to Service:

"Let us remember those things of good report that lead all men unto the love and service of God.

"Let us praise God that has placed in our hearts the seeds of understanding and has given us the power to choose between good and evil.

“ Let us pray God that we may walk fearlessly. That we may not faint in the pursuit of excellence; but put aside all that hinders the spirit in the freedom of pursuit.

“ Let us give thanks that the generations of men tell the long story of endeavour and that it is given to us to endeavour like brave men to stretch out the excellence that is set before us.

“ Let us rejoice that in the unity of that endeavour all men grow alike into the children of God.”

For the sermon the Archbishop took as his text “ Once in three years came the navy of Tharshish bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks,” (1 Kings, x, 22).

On Monday, 6th February, the secretary of the Chamber broadcast in the B.B.C.'s North of England Home Service an admirable postscript to the centenary celebrations; his concluding sentence is quoted in full, because it is a fitting conclusion to the present volume:

“ The solution of our present difficulties is bound to be a team affair, and it must come largely from the thoughts and energies of practical men who can base their ideals on realism—men such as those who created the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce a hundred years ago.”

APPENDIX

<i>Year</i>	<i>Presidents</i>	<i>Vice-Presidents</i>
1850	Thomas B. Horsfall	Hugh Hornby
1851	Thomas B. Horsfall	Hugh Hornby
1852	Hugh Hornby	Francis Shand
1853	Francis Shand	Thomas Bouch
1854	Thomas Bouch	Edward Heath
1855	Edward Heath	Charles Holland
1856	Charles Holland	John Torr
1857	John Torr	Christopher Bushell
1858	Christopher Bushell	Charles Robertson and W. J. Tomlinson
1859	Charles Robertson	W. J. Tomlinson and J. T. Danson
1860	W. J. Tomlinson	T. B. Forwood and K. Findlay
1861	William Brown	Thomas Chilton and R. A. Macfie
1862	Thomas Chilton	R. A. Macfie and John Campbell
1863	R. A. Macfie	H. J. Hampshire and T. A. Bushby
1864	H. Grainger	P. H. Rathbone and H. W. Meade-King
1865	P. H. Rathbone	H. W. Meade-King and J. G. Livingston
1866	H. W. Meade-King	Francis Prange and C. E. Rawlins, Junr.
1867	C. E. Rawlins, Junr.	John Patterson and Charles Clark
1868	John Patterson	Charles Clark and H. Duckworth
1869	Charles Clark	H. Duckworth and E. K. Muspratt
1870	H. Duckworth	E. K. Muspratt and W. B. Forwood

<i>Year</i>	<i>Presidents</i>	<i>Vice-Presidents</i>
1871	W. B. Forwood	F. Prange and Bernard Hall
1872	F. Prange	Bernard Hall and Robert Trimble
1873	Bernard Hall	Robert Trimble and L. R. Baily
1874	L. R. Baily	Robert Trimble and Samuel Smith
1875	E. K. Muspratt	Samuel Smith and J. Barkeley Smith
1876	Samuel Smith	J. Barkeley Smith and T. F. A. Agnew
1877	Samuel Smith	J. Barkeley Smith and W. S. Caine
1878	W. B. Forwood	James L. Bowes and S. Williamson
1879	W. B. Forwood	James L. Bowes and S. Williamson
1880	W. B. Forwood	James L. Bowes and S. Williamson, M.P.
1881	Richard Lowndes	Henry Coke and W. Adamson
1882	Richard Lowndes	W. Adamson and H. Jevons
1883	Richard Lowndes	W. Adamson and H. Jevons
1884	Richard Lowndes	Colonel C. B. Paris and W. S. Barrett
1885	Colonel C. B. Paris Elisha Smith	Elisha Smith and Horace Walker
1886	Elisha Smith	W. S. Barrett and Horace Walker
1887	Elisha Smith	W. S. Barrett and Horace Walker
1888	Henry Coke	Horace Walker
1889	Henry Coke	James L. Bowes and C. McArthur
1890	Henry Coke	J. Thorburn and C. McArthur
1891	Henry Coke	J. Thorburn and C. McArthur
1892	Charles McArthur	J. Thorburn and
1893		F. Henderson
1894	Charles McArthur	J. Thorburn and
1895		A. L. Jones

<i>Year</i>	<i>Presidents</i>	<i>Vice-Presidents</i>
1896	F. C. Danson	J. Thorburn and A. L. Jones
1897	F. C. Danson	A. L. Jones and G. H. Cox
1898		
1899		
1900	A. L. Jones	G. H. Cox and
1901		P. E. J. Hemelryk
1902	Sir A. L. Jones, K.C.M.G.	G. H. Cox and P. E. J. Hemelryk
1903		
1904		Colonel Goffey and Charles Lancaster
1905		
1906	Sir A. L. Jones, K.C.M.G.	Stuart Deacon and T. F. Harrison
1907		
1908		
1909		

President

1910-1943	The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Derby, K.G. (17th Earl)
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	<i>Vice-Presidents</i>	<i>Chairmen of the Chamber</i>
1910	Walter Holland and Harold D. Bateson	C. Lancaster, J.P.
1911	Walter Holland and Sir William Lever, Bart	Stuart Deacon, J.P.
1912	Walter Holland and Sir William Lever, Bart.	H. D. Bateson
1913 to 1918	H. D. Behrend and G. A. Moore	H. D. Bateson
1919	H. D. Dickie and J. P. Rudolf	G. A. Moore
1920	H. D. Dickie and J. P. Rudolf	{ H.D. Behrend (Resigned May 1920 J. P. Rudolf elected)
1921	H. D. Dickie and F. Brocklehurst	J. P. Rudolf
1922	H. D. Dickie and F. Brocklehurst	J. Sandeman Allen

<i>Year</i>	<i>Vice-Presidents</i>	<i>Chairmen of the Chamber</i>
1923	F. Brocklehurst and J. Pickering Jones	J. Sandeman Allen
1924	F. Brocklehurst and J. Pickering Jones	J. Sandeman Allen, M.P.
1925	J. Pickering Jones and J. M. A. Glover	J. Sandeman Allen, M.P., J.P.
1926 } 1927 }	J. Pickering Jones and J. M. A. Glover	Lt. Colonel Albert Buckley, D.S.O., J.P.
1928	Lt. Col. Albert Buckley, D.S.O., J.P.	J. Pickering Jones
1929	Lt. Col. Albert Buckley, D.S.O., J.P.	Frank Brocklehurst, J.P.
1930	J. Albert Eckes	Frank Brocklehurst, J.P.
1931 } 1932 }	J. Albert Eckes	Arthur D. Dean
1933 } 1934 }	Arthur D. Dean	T. Edward Lescher, O.B.E.
1935 } 1936 }	T. Edward Lescher, O.B.E.	Picton H. Jones
1937 } 1938 }	Picton H. Jones	Dan Tobey
1939 } 1940 } 1941 } 1942 }	Dan Tobey, J.P.	J. Mitchell Jones
1943 } 1944 }	J. Mitchell Jones	Major R. H. Thornton, M.C., J.P.
1945	Major R. H. Thornton, M.C., J.P.	W. H. Perry
1946	W. H. Perry	W. S. S. Hannay, J.P.
1947	W. S. S. Hannay, J.P.	E. A. G. Caröe

President

1948	The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Derby, M.C., D.L. (18th Earl)
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*Chairmen**Vice-Chairmen*

1948	W. S. S. Hannay, J.P.	E. A. G. Caröe
1949	E. A. G. Caröe	Bertram Nelson, J.P.

Year

LIST OF SECRETARIES

1850-1863	Robert Tronson	
1864-1884	William Blood	
1885-1912	Thomas H. Barker	
1913-1917	A. H. Milne, C.M.G.	
1918-1919	C. R. B. McGilchrist, J.P.	
1920	Robert M. Martin	
1921-1939	J. L. McCarthy, F.C.I.S.	
1940-1942	J. L. McCarthy, F.C.I.S.	} joint secretaries
	Stephen Wilson	
1943	Stephen Wilson	
1944-1946	John E. Nicholson (acting)	

Present senior staff: Lt. Col. P. G. R. Burford, T.D., M.A.,
secretary

John E. Nicholson—assistant secretary

J. Caldwell Jones—committee secretary

Mrs. M. Ault—assistant committee secretary

H. M. Thompson—cashier and office manager

Portrait photographs in this volume were taken by Navana (Liverpool) Ltd. ; the groups at the Town Hall and at the Adelphi Hotel, as well as the scene in Liverpool Cathedral, were photographed by Photographic Services (North West) Ltd.





